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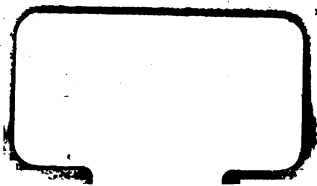
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62.9.

SAYS SHE TO HER NEIGHBOUR,

*What ?*

32-9



FOUR VOLUMES IN TWO.

*Wm*

BY

AN OLD-FASHIONED ENGLISHMAN.

*Mrs. Hoffman.*

---

Oh ! still be mine the gen'rous wish—to bless  
 And wipe the streaming tear from pale Distress,  
 Make keen-ey'd Malice hide her guilty head,  
 O'er the dim mind bright Truth her lustre shed,  
 Celestial Freedom ev'ry charm unfold,  
 And firm Integrity the Fair uphold.

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VOLUME I. & II.

*F, 9*

NEW-YORK:

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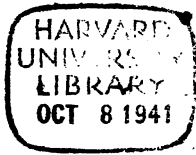
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1815.

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KP592



## *Says She to her Neighbour, What?*

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### CHAP. I.

And Slander held her trumpet high,  
And told the story to the sky.

MOORE.

IN the beginning of the dark and dreary month of November, 1811, I had the good fortune to meet with the admirable history and opinions of my distant relation, under the title of “(Thinks I to myself;” and perceiving in them a fund of rational entertainment, and admirable example, though utterly ungarished by any of the various adventures, incidents, politics, metaphysics, fashions, frights, doctrines, horrors, duels, robberies, elopements, and descriptions, which either constitute or ornament other works of apparently the same character, or at least agreeing in an outside resemblance, it struck me that the life of a country gentleman was not by any means so insipid a thing as many of the *haut ton* pretend to think it; and I therefore resolved to follow the excellent example of the author I had just read, and lay my own before the world, in connexion with those of my nearest relatives; for as we have never been divided in action, affection, or fortune, in any great degree, we must be considered as a set of beings whom God having joined together, even my newly-acquired title of author cannot put asunder; and it is probable this is the first time a new-acquired title was adopted, without the fatality of dividing some of the smaller branches, at least, from their principal trunk.

In order to accomplish this desirable end, I provided myself, in the first place, with a most admirable stock of new pens, and a ream of paper, which might withstand, if possible, my continual propensity to blotting; I shut myself many hours together in my library, and gave orders that no person should walk on that side of the house, which,

for the better digesting of my cogitations, I desired to be kept as silent as possible.

No sooner were these orders communicated to my household, than they travelled forthwith to the lodge, and thence, by easy transition, to every human being who came either through it, or near it; so that in a short time, not only all the neighbouring gentry and farmers, but every shop-keeper, manufacturer, and pedlar, in the adjoining town of Fairborough, was informed, directly or indirectly, that Sir Theodore Sedgewood was going to write a full, true, and particular account of his life, parentage, and education.

Says she to her neighbour—"What can Sir Thé be thinking of? He surely cannot be so foolish as to retail all the births, deaths, and weddings of the Sedgewoods, for a thousand years past, since the parish register has already told it, and in doing so, probably comprised all that was really interesting in their history; for I do not consider the mention that is made of them now and then in the history of England, as fit to be made the subject of a novel at all. As to their faults, poor souls, why drag *them* from obscurity? And their virtues being chiefly negative, I don't see the use of attempting to illustrate them—What can Sir Thé be thinking of?"

"As far as I can hear," returned she to *her* neighbour, "it is his own history he is going to write, which must be, indeed *can* be, nothing more than another name for his confessions: for as we all know what he has been doing, or *appeared* to have been doing, ever since he came into the world, if he pretends to give us any thing new, it must be an account of tricks we never suspected, of scenes we little thought he acted in, and of characters we little supposed him to be acquainted with. I shall not be surprised now if we hear a little more about Nancy Collett; for it always appeared strange to me that she should be married off while he was at London, in such a hurry, by her old aunt."

"Aye, true," interrupted the first speaker, "or something will come out, depend upon it, respecting Mrs. Bellair. I never could bear that woman, a fine, sentimental, tall thing: every name will be changed, of course; but I shall be able to find them out, I'll answer for it; not that I would say a word against Sir Thé, certainly not; I always say he's quite a pattern of a man; but 'tis a long lane that has no turning; and he may have had many, for ought we know."

“Or may have them yet,” resumed her friend; “in my opinion, there’s a great hazard to run yet; let him get into parliament, let him live in London, then comes the time of trial for his integrity, his fidelity, and all that; aye, aye, ‘well may the castle stand that never was stormed;’ and I look upon the short trials he has had in the gay world, as just nothing at all, as one may say.”

“But pray, sir, who is she that says this to her neighbour; or rather the two shes, for you have introduced a couple of speakers?”

My dear madam, there are a legion of them; and if you are not acquainted with some, or even many of the family, you are more to be envied than any person of my acquaintance, for you not only possess the best circle of friends in all Europe, but you are yourself the most perfect woman it contains, or very nearly so; and I hope, before we part, to have obtained the greatest possible degree of intimacy with you, consistent with your duties and my own; and to this arrangement, your husband, brother, father, friend, or even heir, can make no reasonable objection.

“But this is not answering my question.”

Very true, madam; but knowing that too many ladies, albeit perfect in all other cases, preferred an act of gallantry to one of service, and forgave a man for disobeying their commands, at the very moment when he was professing submission to their will, I took the liberty of following the beaten track, and now hasten to obey your wishes, by informing you who were the personages that, in my own immediate neighbourhood, were the more particular censors, controllers, guides, guardians, loungers, spectators, and tattlers, of the place.

Every place has its own circle, its little world, which is, to every resident connected immediately with it, of as much more importance to his appearance and comfort in *that* world, as the clothing which at this present moment warms or adorns him, is to that which is laid by in his wardrobe for splendid occasions, or that which, still resting on the shelves of the shopkeeper, he looks up to as the purchase of a future day: to carry the simile a little farther, the society of small towns often is like a suit of old clothes, ~~grown~~ <sup>grown</sup> too strait for the increased bulk of your fortune, or liberality of your opinions; yet that straitness produces ~~an effect~~, for it was shaped by local attachment, and buttoned

by early friendship : in a more enlarged circle, you have the advantage of increased liberty ; and if you advance to the metropolis, you have the advantage of fashionable latitude in perfection ; but your coat hangs so loosely about you, that you scarce know whether you have got one on your back. In the sunshine of youth, health, and prosperity, this light summer wear is charming ; but in those wintry hours to which every human being is more or less subject, we feel the want of a closer ligament with our fellow-creatures, and can the better submit to be pinched in one place, than deserted in another ; and become willing to barter even ease and liberty for the support of esteem, and the nourishment of affectionate attention. It may be said that, in London, hospitality, individual affection, and every rite of unbounded benevolence and friendship, are every day exercised as fully as in the country ; to which I fully assent ; but these cordialities must be necessarily exercised in a certain circle, and *she* will creep in, and make *her* observations on life, character, and fortune, much in the same way, though 'tis probable with less galling minuteness, from the increased difficulty of collecting family anecdote : this difficulty is, however, abundantly compensated for among the higher circles, by the publicity which the prints of the day give to the petty detail of malice, and the aberrations of thoughtlessness, when they are once broached ; so that, upon the whole, the advantages and disadvantages of each state of society, are pretty fairly balanced ; and after the closest investigation of the matter, I do not find any place of residence free from this disqualifying attendant, nor, I fear, am likely to do so, except I could fix my abode in Utopia ; but as it is an increasing evil, and one that may be corrected, as it proceeds frequently as much from idle levity as inquisitive malice, and many who promote it would shrink from the practice, if they were aware of the consequences, and others would blush for the meanness of the practice, if they were aware of its contemptibility, I shall, now and then, as it may suit my narrative, just mention what I know has, from time to time, been said by one neighbour to another, in the way of chit-chat, with the consequences of these amiable communications, just as a glass for more enlightened, more fashionable, and it may be, more noble personages to dress by.

Ten thousand times (according to the Spanish idiom, as

least) ought I to crave your pardon, my good lady, for this second act of abominable digression; but the fact stands simply thus; the very day after my paper, pens, and ink, had been laid, *secundem artem*, in my library, my orders for silence issued, and circuitously promulgated, as I have already said, it so happened that I was engaged to dine at the house of a neighbouring acquaintance, where I was sure to meet the person, or persons, who are intended by the new mode of personification my title page has bestowed upon them; and, with your approbation, we will meet them together, as being the principal persons in Fairborough and its vicinity; and as Fairborough is the most ancient, most beautiful, and, of course, most *interesting* borough in the west-riding of Yorkshire, which, all the world knows, is the most populous, most wealthy, and most *fascinating* part of his British majesty's British dominions, I trust the visit will not be thought derogatory to you, madam: though it is with some degree of mortification I am obliged to announce, that the gentleman to whom we pay it was once much better known upon 'Change than in the county annals. There, indeed, it stood justly so high, that in despite of my aristocratic prejudices, to which, as an inhabitant of Fairborough, and the lord of Fairborough manor and forest, with an eternal list of legal rights to acts of despotic sovereignty therein, I do yet acknowledge that, as one of the first citizens in the first city in the world, I think the said name of Mr. Jeremiah Dornton was as respectable as if it had flowed through the veins of country squire, who had by turns bled for petty tyrants in the wars of the barons, or even supported royalty itself for the last thousand years. Unfortunately, Mrs. Dornton was of a very different way of thinking; she was the last descendant of a house which had once borne baronial honours, and in every branch of it had strictly avoided all intercourse with the degrading name of commerce: how Mrs. Dornton herself, at the age of thirty-six, and in full possession of all the pride of her ancestry, came to make such a lapse in the family pedigree, she vowed she *never* could tell, further than imputing it to a fatality inexplicable and lamentable; for she never could allow that the tender passion had any thing to do in the case: this blindness in her own case, on Mrs. Dornton's part, was amply supplied by the quicker optics of her neighbours, who, being well aware that the mansion-

house of her late father, Gabriel Featherbottom, Esq. was, at his death, mortgaged to the last farthing of its value, whereby she was left portionless, at a time of life when beauty is on its wane, and in a period of society, when the claims of blood require the support of wealth to gain them respect, and in some cases even to ensure them from ridicule; from these causes, it was pretty evident that Miss Patience Featherbottom (who, notwithstanding her name, was never mistaken for Job's eldest daughter) would find it a convenient thing to marry; and as she had in vain set her cap at the baronet, my father, then a widower, and after him at every man the least likely to repair the increasing dilapidations in Featherbottom Hall; and then finding all help hopeless in the country, had flown to London, apparently with a determination not to be sent from thence empty away; it appeared, I observe, not so extremely surprising that she should condescend to accept the ample fortune of Mr. Dornton, and ride in his costly carriage, and swathe her tall, meager, stately person, in his rich satins; although obliged to endure the constant attendance of a husband who had once soiled his fingers with filthy trade, and whose language and manners bore indubitable marks of his former line of life; but though many went so far as to hint this, yet year after year passed on, and the lady's surprise continued in full force; for as her mind was no longer oppressed with learning that most difficult of all sciences, the making a figure without the means to make it with, and which is, in the country, a matter of tenfold difficulty to what some practical performers find it in London; she, I say, being no longer oppressed by this evil, had the leisure to reflect upon her own weakness, and to lament her husband's unworthiness of the honour she had done him, in presenting him with the manorial residence of her ancestors.

The thorough good temper of Jeremiah was such, that although he very soon discovered his own utter incapability of being worked up into a fox-hunting Yorkshire squire, he would have been contented to spend his money in any way his lady had pointed out, and have made his bows in due proportion to all the degrees of respectability and relationship, her cousins, and cousins' cousins, to the tenth degree of consanguinity, might have required; but by requiring too much, the lady, in a great degree, lost that which she possessed. She had set her heart upon his changing his

name to hers ; and in order to bring this about, she ridiculed his own name and past pursuits, his vulgar ideas, and low habits, without mercy ; the mark was overshot ; and though the poor man soon perceived that Jerry Dornton must never lie on down, he resolved most magnanimously, that no wife on earth, with all her family at her back, should make him into a Featherbottom.

“ No,” said he, his whole figure dilating with majestic rotundity, “ this here is one of the things I never will agree to while I lives ; tityvate the old ouse, gild the pictures, sash the vindows, and put statutes in the gardens, if you please, but nivver go to persuade me to change my name ; a name that was good for a plum ten years ago. A pretty tale, truly, if I shou’d go for to have a son, and the poor babe nivver know his father’s name !”

“ My son shall be a Featherbottom,” said the lady, with a contemptuous toss of the head.

“ My son,” retorted her legal lord, in great wrath, “ shall be Jeremiah Dornton, or he shall never touch a shilling of the fortune I’ve worked so hard to get him.”

It was, perhaps, a lucky thing for this young gentleman that he never once made his appearance in this troublesome world. Being the cause of daily altercations, in one way or other, for the first seven years after the marriage of his parents, as to his future disposition, he prudently appears to have given up all thoughts of venturing on a scene which portended so many difficulties ; and as he has now ceased to be hoped for, Mrs. Dornton not being troubled with a family of her own, obligingly interferences as much as possible in conducting those of other people, often observing, that children are, indeed, certain cares, but uncertain comforts ; that the present manner of bringing up families is so ridiculous and improper, she cannot be surprised at any thing which happens ; and this exordium is generally followed by an account of the flirtations of Miss —— with the recruiting officer, or the passion of some young man of family for his father’s dairy maid. She is, therefore, undoubtedly one of those who “ say things to their neighbours.”

The gentleman who sits at her right hand is young Lord Sticker-ton, sent, much against his will, to pay his annual visit to his two aunts, the ladies in blue damask, who are, in fact, his father’s aunts, and reside in this neighbourhood on a fortune by no means large, but which the necessities of



his father, who, with a noble estate, is grievously poor, renders worth his while to secure. Lady Betty, the elder of these virgin sisters, is sensible, humane, well bred, and open hearted. She says little to her neighbour, except to explain whatever appears paradoxical to the lovers of mystery, and meliorate the aspersions of scandal; the continual exercise of this employment is constantly prepared for her by her younger sister, Lady Frances, who, having never forgiven the world for its neglect during the days of her youth, neglects no opportunity of making reprisals; and every human being, in or out of her vortex, from a countess to a charwoman, is, at times, honoured with her notice; she is, of course, one that "says things to her neighbour."

A very different character appears to her right: poor Mrs. Maxwell being left the rich jointured widow of an old man, whom at seventeen she was commanded to marry by her aunt, on whom she was dependant, was determined, in her second union, to please herself; she did this, by uniting herself to a handsome man whom she met with at a watering place, where, like the devil, "he was seeking whom he might devour." Plausible and insinuating, he perceived that the externals of virtue, at least, must be adopted in his conduct; and as he had pretty well exhausted the world of dissipation, he found it no difficult task to lead, for a season, that orderly kind of life which suited alike his constitution, his purse, and his designs: new to the world, and romantic in her dreams of felicity, the widow thought the poverty he honestly avowed, and the long story of misfortunes he recounted, from which it appeared that he was the most injured of men, was no bar to their union, since it appeared that each party had what the other wanted; and in a fit of imprudence, (she, poor woman, dignified with the name of awakened sensibility,) gave him her hand, and, too late, discovered that she was become the wife of an unprincipled gamester, and a sordid tyrant. As, however, his scene of action had laid in a part of the kingdom far distant from her home, she thought it possible to hide her vexation from her own world, and succeeded better than could have been expected. As her income, though ample, was only a life-annuity, to which was attached a handsome residence, Mr. Maxwell declared his intention of renouncing the world for her sake, and living henceforth in elegant seclusion;

impression it has been the constant endeavour of his wife to promote; but it is a task to hide the cankerworm which the consciousness of being united to a cool, unfeeling, systematic scoundrel must create, to which, even female ingenuity is unequal; and the pale cheek of Mrs. Maxwell tells the truth her lips would willingly deny. Unable to speak of herself, every tale of disaster and sorrow gains in her a willing auditor and retailer; and she gains a species of melancholy comfort, from learning that fraud, injustice, unkindness, and misfortune, are to be found, more or less, in the families of all her acquaintance; her mind, opened to suspicion from the baseness of the person whom she fondly and weakly trusted, has learnt thence to doubt the existence of worth in any other; and the continual shifts she has recourse to, to hide the anguish of her own heart, and gloss over the meanness and cruelty of her husband's daily conduct towards herself, induces her to conclude that many other wives are in the same predicament, notwithstanding the smiles they assume, and the saucy happiness their appearance displays. Thus sorrow has made a croaking tatter of a woman, whom a different situation would have rendered lively, beneficent, and candid.

The two young ladies, Misses Mariana and Julietta, Robinson, are of a still different description, having read the choice productions of the Fairborough circulating library, till their heads teem with delicate distresses, mysterious embarrassments, concerted elopements, tender sentiments, and equivocal assignations without number; and being so situated as to preclude either the active duties of household management, or the dissipation of varied amusement, from the usual effects of forcing them to see things a little as they are, they have obtained the faculty ascribed to the jaundiced eye in perfection. For them the world teems with adventures, in a situation where no human being, less gifted, could see the possibility of such agreeable surprises. As it cannot be doubted but these ladies are converted, by a lively imagination, into the respective heroines of each book they peruse, it generally happens that their neighbours become, in their eyes, subordinate characters of the piece in question; and if the distresses of said heroine arise from a distressing litigation—an overbearing guardian, the shape of a fat waddling dignitary of the church—a cold maiden aunt, or a rich persecuting landlord, who

distresses the parents that he may ruin the child—in these cases, some hole is sure to be picked in the coat of honest Manby, our wealthy attorney, poor Mr. Elland, our worthy vicar, Mrs. Barbara Sedgewood, my maiden aunt, or, lastly, in the lord of the manor himself. There is no malice in all this; 'tis the rage for novelty; but in how many cases is all the evil which malice could desire effected by it? When the dear creatures were contented to improve Maria into Mariana, and Julia into Julietta, it was a little harmless encroachment, very tolerable in pretty girls: and even when two itinerant performers were declared noblemen in disguise, lounging about the town to seize some lovely orphan, and convey her perforce to a lone house and old woman, (these being modern substitutes for a castle and a drawbridge,) the thing was not so much amiss; but when it became expedient to give hints that an upright man had come unfairly by his money; that a benevolent minister of the gospel was not only tyrannical and prejudiced, (as *all priests are*, unless they are poor Welsh curates, with hoary locks, and, I should suppose, silver beards,) but that he had wronged his orphan charge of some fortune never heard of, save in the ladies' wits; when it appeared that my dear aunt Barbara, whom heaven in mercy gave the world for a pattern of unassuming wit, unostentatious charity, and cheerful good humour, was sour, splenetic, morose, satirical, and tyrannical; and that the benevolence practised at the Hall towards its dependants, was meant to trepan pretty girls, while it pretended to assist declining fathers—the system of romance became then too serious for jest, and has given me an undoubted right to place these two pretty misses on the list of those who “say to their neighbours” what they ought not even to whisper to themselves.

Mrs. Manby, the wife of the attorney mentioned above, is a scandal-monger by profession; she was married from town; and declares the country would be a positive bore, if a woman of spirit were denied the privilege of chatting about her neighbours; she is well aware that her fashionable dress, her tasty little routes, and her frequent jaunts, find abundant food for the comments of all around her, and considers herself as possessing the right to ridicule *those* who abuse *her*. She is feared by some, dreaded by others, and courted by all. She is not an ill-tempered woman.

and I always find her amusing, I confess; but she is much to blame; the random shot which punishes justly a faulty character, may wound a tender heart; and no apology, no act of future kindness, can atone for the wounds thus inflicted; I have told her so many a time, and as I have found her hitherto incorrigible, she must be considered one of the leaders in my band of reprehensibles.

Dr. Cantharides, (yes, ladies, all scandal-mongers, petty calumniators, compounders of truth and falsehood, so as to make "the worse appear the better truth," listeners to servants, and retailers of family quarrels, are indubitably old *women*.) Dr. Cantharides will be there; he has survived his practice and a considerable part of his faculties; but that of receiving a simple fact, and making it into a slanderous anecdote, will, I believe, never forsake him: 'tis but, however, justice to say, he never dispenses his too acceptable prescriptions, without abundantly accompanying them with these lenient emulsions—"I could scarcely bring myself to believe it, but my authority was indisputable; it came from — himself, though not immediately to me, yet by a channel I cannot doubt;" a significant look or reference explains the channel also; the company are satisfied as to the truth, but frequently condemn, with propriety, the person who had so communicated with the doctor, who tells all under the seal of secrecy, for he thinks it should be stopped in its progress. Thus several are implicated; confidence is lost in society; aversions contracted; and the "love of many wax cold" towards their dearest connexions, from a circumstance as trivial as the mixing of a pudding, or the pattern of a new waistcoat. This animal says things to its neighbour.

Mr. and Mrs. Parley married when they were very young, by command of their respective parents, for the best of all possible reasons: Mr. Parley's father had a large estate, very considerably mortgaged; but he was a man of family, and not far removed from a baron's title and contingent estate: the father of Mrs. Parley was rich, but his grandfather was unknown; the young couple were commanded to marry, and to have an heir to the barony; they complied with the first requisition, but were disobedient to the second, for Mrs. Parley brought nothing but daughters the first five years of her marriage; after which she most provokingly retired from, or at least suspended, her

labours, having nothing more to do; for she had always heard her girls spoken of with contempt by her father and her father-in-law, who were her guides in all the momentous concerns in life; she began to turn her attention to her husband, and most affectionately undertook his tutelage; he was just desiring to undertake the same task for her; so they mutually endeavoured, for two or three years, to benefit each other, and in the course of this pursuit, each discovered that they were ill-matched, and never could assimilate: each grew discontented and ill-humoured with themselves and every one around them; instead of remembering the sage adage of "make the best of a bad bargain," each thought only of making the worst, by aggravating the case as far as possible. During this time, the father of Mr. now the honourable Mr. Parley, obtained the expected title, and the family wishes for an heir were increased. The couple who had aggravated petty discontents into actual miseries, contrived to increase the sum, by assuring themselves that even their dislike of each other would be removed by this bond of union; and that which had ever naturally been an object of desire, became now one of such absolute necessity, that, notwithstanding the regular pleasure each enjoyed of quarrelling with the other three times a day, life was little better than a blank; for want of that very thing which, by healing all their differences, seemed likely to deprive them of this agreeable stimulus.

Notwithstanding these bickerings, which probably are of greater benefit to the physical system than the moral, it came to pass that Mrs. Parley was once more pregnant, notwithstanding the repeated assertions of her husband, who had maintained that such an event never would take place with a woman of her perverse temper; she, on her part, maintained, that she should have another girl; for Mr. Parley's invincible obstinacy never changed his system in any thing. The fathers interfered; fearful that the lady's health, and, what was of more importance, the health of her expected heir, might suffer from too much irritability in her nervous system, both parties were prevailed upon to delay for a season their habitual recreation: obedience to parental authority was habitual to each, but the habit of finding fault was become necessary; debarred from this agreeable entertainment at home, each sought it abroad, and became at

least similar in one pursuit, that of backbiting their higher neighbours, and reproaching their lower. In due time an heir was given to the house, and the two grandfathers exultingly looked upon it as the bond of union: for nearly a month it appeared so to their children, and there were even moments when they fancied they could love each other. (It must be observed, at that time they only *passed moments* together.) The lady recovered her limbs and her tongue; old feelings and old habits returned, with the additional taste acquired during the cessation of hostilities; and Mr. and Mrs. Parley may both be fairly set down among those who "say to their neighbours, and of their neighbours," such things as their neighbours all say of them.

"Dear me, you have a strange set of acquaintance, sir!"

*Strange*, madam! let me tell you, few neighbourhoods can boast of any so respectable; perhaps I have told you the worst part of them, only to make the best more interesting and agreeable; you will there see Sir James Incedon, who rails at nothing but government, and his two charming daughters, who are incapable of railing at either government or any thing else.

"Are they dumb, sir?"

No, ma'am, but they are highly accomplished, and very amiable, which amounts, in this respect, to the same thing; for as they can always speak well on any subject, and are desirous of saying no ill on any subject, they never talk scandal at all.

Then we have likewise squire Brushwood and his son, the former a tough sportsman, who talks of nothing but hounds, game acts, and the superior merits of ale to Madeira; the latter an Oxford scholar in his noviciate, of course he never condescends to talk farther than he deems it necessary, to show his unqualified contempt for the whole college of Fairborough. We have also Colonel Hatfield, his son and daughter, all enlightened, agreeable people, who have seen much of the world, and blend benevolence of heart with suavity of manners. We have the vicar of our own church, Mr. Elland, a man whom to know is to reverence and love. Likewise Dr. Wilkinson, a neighbouring rector, who, though somewhat inclined to "talk to his neighbour," is yet a very good humoured man, and only chatters scandal when the conversation is so dull that there is no other

method of rekindling the flame of conviviality. Then there are the respective curates of these two gentlemen, one of whom is—

“Curates, Sir Theodore! do you admit *curates* in your circle?”

My good lady, at Fairborough we all go to church; and how you suppose we can be so inconsistent as to sit down on Sunday to listen to the advice, or it may be, remonstrance, of a man whom, on Monday, we consider unfit even to bear us company, I cannot conceive. Be assured, with all our rusticity in the country, we are not so ridiculous as to exalt a man over our heads one day, whom we put under our feet, without any provocation, another. So, as I was saying, one of these is a married man, whose wife is a companionable, sensible woman, the daughter of a worthy gentleman in—

“Oh, well, if he has married somebody’s daughter with fortune, ’tis all very well; but I thought you were speaking of a poor curate and his dowdy wife.”

I am speaking of a good man, who is only a curate, and certainly not a rich one; but I have mentioned many rich people in the neighbourhood; I have told you, too, that our vicar was an excellent man, and from this I concluded, it was impossible to suppose any man in the sacred office, whose practice accorded with his profession, could not in our neighbourhood be as abjectly poor as I fear many clergymen are. Mrs. Grant has written an admirable little book she calls a view of the state of society, in some part of America; now it is my intention to give you a view of the state of society, as it exists at this very hour, in my native place, with its merits and faults, the latter of which are either caused or connected solely by the encroaching evil of “saying things to our neighbours, and of our neighbours,” which we ought not to say, but which it appears I am saying very freely; but as I do it with a purity of intention they cannot pretend, I make no apology for my conduct; but shall add in their behalf, that while I thus hold up the sins of Fairborough to light, I may safely challenge every borough in England, *without* her sin, to throw the first stone at her.

## CHAPTER II.

———— I do not think  
 So fair an outside, and such stuff within,  
 Endows a man but him. SHAKSPEARE.

HAVING devoted the first chapter of this work to my neighbours, I think it high time to begin my promised history in my second, though, as my neighbour justly observed, it is more likely to contain that of some of my ancestors than my own; I have already premised, that we cannot be parted, and this I am aware will lay me under the imputation of family pride, aristocratic prejudice, and all the *et cetera* of exploded notions, which ought to be buried with the feudal tenures by which they were once supported. To all this I may answer, in the language of my accusers—It is not my fault that I was the son of a gentleman, who was the son of a gentleman, and so on, back to the reign of the first Saxon princes: nor am I to blame if the deeds of my ancestors, their love of freedom in some reigns, their unshaken loyalty in others, and their private virtues in all, were so unceasingly descanted upon in my infancy, so completely sucked in with my mother's milk, that they have become interwoven with my very being. How far I may be better or worse for circumstances over which I could have no command, I cannot say; but I will venture to observe, that in my intercourse with the lower orders of society, which has been pretty extensive, I have always observed the common boast of, "my feigther was as honest a mon as ever brak bread," to have ever a salutary effect on the mind, and generally on the morals, of those who make it; and as human nature is still human nature, through every gradation of society, I apprehend the same pride may have equally salutary effects in every station under heaven. Do not mistake me: I speak of the pride of virtue when connected with rank, not of rank as unconnected with virtue: my family prejudices may, at times, lead me to think "a saint in crape is twice a saint in lawn;" but they will, I trust, never be found to make me mistake a sinner for a saint in either case, or palliate the errors of an earl, while



I condemn those of a tinker. In truth, my family antiquity says more for my family honesty and good sense, than it does for my family greatness; for since it appears a plain case, that we have, on the whole, not advanced one foot farther in rank and consideration than we did at the conquest, notwithstanding we have at various times drained our estates, and spilt our blood, in defence of our monarchs, it must be inferred, that although good soldiers, we were bad courtiers; and that although we knew how to love our friends, we did not know how to flatter even our sovereigns: after a close examination, I scarcely find one family in the peerage of equal importance with our own in the twelfth century, which is not at this moment in possession of nearly ducal honours. It has been our custom to live quietly at home, till we were called out by some strong or sudden emergency, which being past over, we returned quietly to the government of our fortress, too indolent or too proud to solicit reward by court attendance.

Once upon a time, I find a Sir Thomas Sedgewood entreating the restoration of rights which had been infringed by the insolent favourite of the weak Edward II., and they appear to have been immediately restored; but I cannot learn that Sir Tom budged one foot from the castle in search of them, or even to thank the poor shadow of a monarch who had restored them. I hope he was not ungrateful neither, as I find he soon afterwards endeavoured to do him essential service; but this was impossible; for who can benefit the man who is his own enemy?

The last of my ancestors, whose blood flowed for a Stuart, shed it on the scaffold—"I die," said he, "for being an honest man." I believe every person in the kingdom thought the same, and no one was more fully persuaded of this fact than the usurper who had placed him there; but the second Charles, for whose sake he thus suffered, considered, on all occasions, virtue was its own reward, and did not trouble his family with any intrusions of royal gratitude, for which I at this day most sincerely thank him, as I should certainly blush to retain any thing given by his hands; so we are perfectly agreed.

Passing by the rest of my ancestors, with whom I have certainly an intimate acquaintance, but no personal knowledge, I will stop at my grandfather, whom I remember as a fine old man, with white locks and a little bend in his

shoulders, who used, with somewhat of trembling in his hands, lift me on his knees, gaze on me with fine mild eyes, in which the beam of affection restored a temporary brilliance, and, moving the locks that clustered on my forehead, which he gently kissed, used to tell me stories of good little boys, that became great men, and rode upon fine horses, and built hospitals. This gentleman's history is certainly very remarkable, and deserves your consideration, young ladies, for he was a hero of the first order, and so singular a one, that if Cumberland had not, in his history of Henry, (which, by the way, is a work quite worthy of the excellent author,) proved the existence of similar virtue in Mr. Delapaer, I should not have ventured to offer my poor grandfather's to the world, lest this infidel page should have denied the existence of that merit—it had not found paralleled; his story was simply this:—

Theodore, the eldest of a large family of children, was the offspring of the second son of Sir Charles Sedgewood; but as his uncle, Sir Charles, was a bachelor turned of forty, it was pretty generally supposed that he would prove his uncle's heir, especially as he generally resided with him, and appeared justly dear to him; he did not, however, oppose his entering the army, when at eighteen he appeared to desire it; on the contrary, he bought him a lieutenancy—gave him letters of recommendation to some of his friends—and agreed to remit him an annuity, rather calculated to obviate his necessities than provide for his pleasures, and which was, therefore, no inducement to rest upon as an assurance of future heirship. This was, however, no matter of regret to the gallant boy, who, full of the enthusiasm natural to his age, and the romantic visions nurtured by his education, hastened to join his regiment, then in Germany; and had the satisfaction of making his *debut* in the field of honour, in a manner which secured him the affection of his commanding officer, and the esteem of all his messmates: at the end of his first campaign he was promoted; the second saw him in possession of a company; soon after which he had the satisfaction of returning, for a short time, to the embraces of his family, to every branch of which he was tenderly attached, and which had been lately much afflicted, from the loss of two of its most promising scions by an epidemic fever, a circumstance which Theodore lamented the more, from perceiving that this six-

cumstance had exceedingly affected the health of his mother.

This fond parent hoped that her brother-in-law, by some positive declaration of his will in favour of her eldest son, would obviate the necessity of his continuance in the army; but she soon found, that during the prolongation of the war, her high-spirited son would never be induced to quit it; she therefore did not oppose his first-expressed wish to re-join his regiment, concluding that all eyes would see him with a mother's admiration, and that honour and pleasure must await his acceptance wherever he moved; nor was she greatly deceived, for as far as he was enabled to appear in the gay circle to which his connexions and profession introduced him, so far was he admired; and though ladies did not, as they do now, call a man handsome to his face, and make love in a way that cannot be mistaken by even the dullest observer of sighs and glances, yet there were many indirect means, even in the days of good Queen Caroline, whereby ladies could convey encouragement to the sons of Mars, with as much intelligence and more insinuation than they do now; the elegant Sedgewood had no right to complain of their cruelty, and his first winter in London was passed in as much devotion to the sex as a very handsome man, who happens to be likewise a wit, could give—he danced with them, dressed at them, chatted to them, and languished for them; (in ogles and sonnets;), but his heart was untouched; and he repaired to the standard, at the first summons, with an alacrity that bespoke glory his first mistress, and that the reign of the senses must, to a mind like his, be ever of temporary duration.

It was nearly three years before my grandfather returned to England, and in that short period his two eldest sisters had fallen victims to the small-pox, and of his father's large family, one daughter, about ten years old, alone remained: as soon as possible, he hastened to Fairborough, to console the bereaved parents, and to shed the tears of fraternal love over these blighted blossoms; he found his mother now sunk in her health beyond the possibility of recovery, and his father little better than the semblance of his former self, since he was hourly dying, in one more dear to him than life. The heart of Theodore was pierced with affliction, but not lost to hope; he perceived the pleasure his presence gave his drooping parent; and though at this

the metropolis was shining in all its pleasures, and his friends, the late companions of his toils, were pressing him to join them there, his only care was to obtain a longer time to spend with his mother; and as it was easily granted, he remained at home during the winter, where his presence might be truly said to gild the chambers of death, and irradiate the grave.

But the hour appointed for all is inevitable; and despite of unnumbered cares, from the tenderest of husbands, and vain hopes for ever nurtured by the most affectionate of sons, this amiable woman breathed her last sigh as they were both supporting her on the couch, and left, for some time, a chasm in the existence of each, which those only can estimate who have lost a virtuous and beloved friend in so near a connexion.

The tears and endearments of little Barbara, ever the most affectionate, and once the most vivacious of children, at length recalled Mr. Sedgewood to a sense of what he owed this last pledge of his lost wife's affection, and his fears for her health superseded, in some measure, the indulgence of his own sorrow; this circumstance was consoling to Theodore, as about a month after his mother's death, he was promoted to a majority, and requested to join his regiment, then at Winchester; but soon afterwards removed to Reading, from whence the easy distance to London made him accessible to his friends; but his mind was untuned to light pleasures; and a solitary ramble, in which he could sigh unheard, possessed more charms for him than any society in which the heart had no intercourse.

In one of these desultory rambles, as he pursued the windings of the Thames, and was comparing its majestic course with the silent lapse of life, he was startled by a loud scream, as of a woman or boy in extreme distress, and looking forwards, he perceived a boy in the water endeavouring to raise something which he had not strength to effect; it immediately struck him that it was some youths from Eton college, who, in the poet's words, had "disdained the limits of their little reign," and were come hither for the purpose of bathing; he flew to the spot, and found his fears were verified: the youth whose shrieks had drawn him to the spot was so nearly exhausted, that it was with difficulty that the cheering and commanding voice of Major Sedgewood enabled him to avail himself of his assistance,

and point to the place where his friend had sunk, apparently to rise no more.

The major was an excellent swimmer; throwing off his coat and sword, he plunged into the river, and had soon the satisfaction of seizing the body he sought, and of bearing it to the shore; but he was bitterly disappointed, on arriving there, to find all signs of animation fled from the most lovely features he had ever contemplated. Not, however, despairing of restoration, he urged the young companion, who appeared a year or two older than the youth he held, to exert himself in procuring assistance; and heard from him, with great satisfaction, that he knew a small farm in the neighbourhood where help could be procured, and which he rose to show him. Taking his precious burden in his arms with the greatest tenderness, the major followed his languid and mournful conductor; and had soon the satisfaction of entering a decent cottage, where the inhabitants instantly obeyed his wishes of procuring necessary warmth, so far as it was in their bounded power. Major Sedgewood, after nearly an hour of incessant labour in chafing and fomenting the body, had at length the inexpressible satisfaction of perceiving a faint pulsation; his hopes revived, and his efforts were quickened; with a delight scarcely to be conceived by those who have not witnessed resuscitation, the benevolent Theodore beheld reviving life animate the features of the pallid boy; and at length heard him, in a faint voice, pronounce the name of his companion, whose extreme agitation, at this moment, was so great, that he sunk in a swoon by the side of his reviving friend, while the major, scarcely less affected, burst into a flood of tears.

The good woman of the house prudently gave it as her opinion, the moment she saw the youth recover from his faintness, that they had better both lie down together, after drinking some of the warm wine the gentlemen had sent her son for; and she likewise insisted upon it, that he ought to take some himself, and to put on John's Sunday clothes till his own fine ones were dry. The woman, though perfectly respectful, pronounced this request with an urgency that amounted to command, for the heart which is truly affected cannot stand on forms; and the major, mounting her little chamber, obeyed her wishes, and equipped himself in her husband's Sunday apparel. He then stepped into her parlour, which had been, time immemorial, the drawing room

and bed-room, kept for all grand occasions, and there beheld the boys fast asleep in each other's arms; the fine hair of the younger, which the good woman had taken infinite pains to rub dry, now waved over his forehead, and gave a finishing grace to his inimitable features; and the major again thought, that although his eyes were closed, he had never seen such perfect beauty as his face displayed; his brow was open, his eyebrows pencilled by the graces, his nose was a little aquiline, and threw new beauties over a mouth of the most perfect symmetry, on which sat a sweet smile, as if conscious, though in sleep, that he was embracing his friend, and was restored to existence from the very jaws of death. As the major gazed on this boy, new thoughts, new wishes, crowded on his heart, and awakened his imagination; he had never yet seriously thought on marriage, except, as of late, the pains it sometimes induces had afflicted him in sympathy for his father; but as in the bustling life of a soldier, principally spent in a camp, he had found little leisure to cultivate female acquaintance, except during the single winter he had spent in London, he had made a hasty conclusion that there were no more women in the world like his mother, and, of course, none with whom he could wish to make a lasting connexion; and as he was merely a soldier of fortune, he thought it was a very happy thing that he could pursue his profession without the encumbrances too frequently attached to it; yet he was sensible, that if ever a truly amiable woman should attack his heart, her power would be decisive; but never had he felt the conclusion so positive as at this moment—"Were I," said he to himself, the father of that boy, what should I not feel towards his mother!"

The boy awoke from his short but refreshing slumber as he spoke, and fixed upon him a pair of soft blue eyes, so dove-like, yet so animated in their gaze, that they penetrated his heart. "Who are you, sir?" said he, modestly, yet tenderly.

His voice awoke his slumbering companion, who, catching the sound of his words, though he marked not the question, cried—"Oh, my dear Ingleby, that is the good, good gentleman who saved both our lives, who took you from the water a dead corpse—brought you here in his arms—and rubbed you with his own hands till the life came into you!"

Oh, he is not a man, Ingleby, he is an angel sent to save us!"

The grateful boy arose in the bed, but unable to leave it with the rapidity his companion had done, knelt there, and, with clasped hands and upraised eyes, invoked the blessings of Heaven on the saviour of his life: at this moment a carriage bowled hastily along the greensward past the window; in a moment a middle aged gentleman rushed from it into the room, exclaiming—"Where? where?" he saw the angelic countenance of his boy beaming with awakened gratitude—he fell upon his neck, and sunk into the faintness with which nature in mercy relieves the outstretched feelings of moments such as these.

While the gentleman was under the care of his servants, the major resumed his own habiliments; but he was scarcely allowed time for this, ere the gentleman burst upon him with the eager embrace of anxious gratitude, and with trembling joy informed him that he was the preserver of the only son of the earl of Brooksbury, whose gratitude should be as lasting as his life, and who besought him to return to town with the son he had saved, and the father he had delivered from a thousand deaths. He now learnt that the boys had been meeting the earl to dine at Windsor, and on their return, finding themselves warm from the wine they had taken, had resolved on the frolic of bathing before they returned to Eton. Agreeable to this juvenile scheme, they had contrived to send away their servants, whose suspicions having been awakened, the accident which had taken place was discovered, the earl overtaken on his way to London, and happily brought back to witness the restoration of his son, a circumstance he was not apprized of till his arrival, as the servants had learnt where their young master was carried to by the boy who had been sent for wine, and who had positively asserted, that if "the soldier gentleman rubbed and rubbed he for ever and ever, he would niver come bock agin in this world."

This adventure had both fatigued and affected Major Sedgewood too much to allow him, with comfort, to accept his lordship's invitation on this eventful night; but as he greatly approved of his intention to have medical advice for the young nobleman, he gladly assisted in wrapping him up and placing him in the carriage, answering his importunate inquiries by an assurance of seeing him in London very soon;

adding—"Surely, my lord, you do not suppose it possible I can forget you."

"Do not call me my lord," said the affectionate boy; "call me Frederic—your own Frederic—for surely I am your own; I have cost you a great deal, I am certain, and I have little doubt but you are very ill, though you don't say any thing about it."

A shade of something like displeasure passed over the earl's brow at the beginning of this speech, but was dissipated before the end of it: manners were at this period more formal than they have been for some time past, and the earl was a nice observer of forms; his heart was, however, too nearly touched at present to feel their influence beyond the moment; and when he turned, for the last time, to shake hands with the major, he fell into his arms, dissolved in feminine tenderness: the major felt his own weakness return as he contemplated the emotions of a father, and, in order to relieve both, he inquired if the other young gentleman accompanied Lord Ingleby to town, or returned to Eton?

"I shall do neither," said the youth, with great *sang froid*, "I shall remain with you."

"My dear marquis," said the earl, recovering himself, "you must by all means go with us; medical advice is necessary for you as well as Frederic, and I—"

"What would you have me to do, major? I shall not easily forget the way in which you gave me the word of command in the water—'exert yourself—life is in your power—be a man;' for I felt that it made a man of me, and therefore I abide your decision."

"Then I shall certainly command you to march under the earl's orders," returned the major, with a smile, "and hope to find you, in a few days, able to march any where."

They parted, each boy twinkling away the tear which would intrude as they grasped the hand of their new-found friend and idolized preserver.



## CHAP. III.

—How many sit  
Beside the deathbed of their dearest friends,  
And point the parting anguish.

THOMSON.

IN a very few days Major Sedgewood presented himself at the earl of Brooksbury's, and was told by a servant out of livery, that his lord had expected him sooner; that an apartment was prepared for him, and begged he would step into the breakfast-parlour till the earl was disengaged.

"Is Lord Ingleby perfectly recovered from the effects of his accident?" inquired the major.

"I don't think he is," said the man, "for he looks pale, and he can't eat; but he was always a delicate creature; he has, however, spirits enough for any thing, and was dressed out last night, playing a tragedy-queen, for all the world like Mrs. Pritchard, swinging his hoop about; he would have made any body die of laughing, that's for certain."

The major entered the breakfast-room, which he found empty, but "Pope's Essay on Criticism," then a new thing, was on the table; and though he was impatient in the first moment to see his young friend, yet he became soon wrapt in this masterly production, and had nearly got through it when the door gently opened, and Lord Ingleby entered in a complete suit of female apparel, and with a cheek glowing with such perfection of health and beauty, as, after the account he had received, at once pleased and delighted him: he flew to the door, and, seizing the hand of the fair actor, cried—"Admirable, indeed, Lady Frederic, or by whatever other name your ladyship may please that I yclep ye; you have certainly put yourself into a form in which a soldier must be very ungallant not to claim the honour you offered of calling you my own. Ay, well, prettily attired enough—very dignified, upon my word—I perceive you will not unsought be won, and you blush as becomingly as any miss in the kingdom; how that is managed is above my comprehension, absolutely above it."

While this speech was passing the major's lips, the object of it had retreated, with an air of dignity and surprise, no

unmingled with fear, back to the door, which, just as she gained it, was pushed hastily forward by Frederic, in his own habiliments, who, entering, ran and threw himself on the neck of the major, exclaiming, "Here he is! help me, dear Caroline, help me to thank him as I ought; you would have had no brother, Carry, to make you laugh or scold, if it had not been for this good gentleman; and as all young ladies love both dearly, pray consider the strength of your obligations."

The major was now, in his turn, dumb-founded; and the lady might have said—"How a man could *blush* so, was utterly above *her* comprehension;" but as, from the stammering apology the major made, she really did comprehend the manner in which he had been deceived, and knew the likeness between her brother and self was so remarkable, that, in the same apparel, it would be easy to mistake a boy of fourteen for a girl under eighteen, she most kindly accorded a full pardon to the trembling culprit, (for certainly my brave ancestor did tremble this time,) and joined with her brother in saying many grateful things to their mutual benefactor. The earl soon after joined them, and general conversation took place of sentimental. In the course of the day they were joined by the young marquis of Blandington, who was delighted to meet their guest. The happy ingenuity of these boys was exerted to find every means of amusement in their power for their visitant; and Lady Caroline lost no opportunity of proving how truly she understood the rites of hospitality. Music at that time was a rare accomplishment, and she possessed this power of communicating pleasure in a high degree: she had a good taste for drawing; and as the major was a proficient in that charming art, he gave her many lessons in it, which were received with as much good will as they were bestowed. While the major had his pencil in his hand, he was often thoughtlessly employed in sketching faces of Lord Ingleby, he said, for his features were indelibly impressed on his memory. Lady Caroline said it was very natural they should; but she could not help remarking, as from the corner of her eye she glanced at her new master's progress, that the pictures of Frederic had often a cap on, and were seldom shaped exactly like a boy in the bust.

The time for the major's departure came, and he met it

with a much worse face than he had ever met death in the field. He discovered now, that the time was indeed come, when he, like all other men, had bowed to female beauty, or, rather, female excellence; for in the conduct and sentiments of Lady Caroline, he had met all he had honoured in his still-lamented mother, or imaged to himself in those moments when he had first allowed himself to dream of connubial felicity; his heart, softened by affliction, was predisposed to tender impressions; and having confided the story of his late sufferings to the sympathizing ear of Lady Caroline, he had received in return the little history of her own privations, for *sorrow*, at this period of her fate, is, perhaps, too strong a term for the present tone of her feelings. It appeared that the earl, her father, had been particularly anxious for a male heir for his estates, but had been disappointed in his wishes by the successive births of four daughters, towards none of which he had ever shown any marks of paternal affection: at length his lady was so happy as to present him with the present Lord Ingleby, but had paid for this precious purchase with her life; hence Lady Caroline had never experienced the tenderness of maternal love; and as her sisters had all dropt off in early infancy, she had been thrown on the protection of her mother's aunt, who, notwithstanding an unfortunate temper, had fulfilled the duties of a parent to her, and was becoming dear to her by her worth, as opening reason showed her the value of her character, when she too was taken by death, and the amiable girl was again consigned to the ceremonious manners and formal attentions of her only parent, who was so entirely wrapt in his boy, that he appeared almost to grudge even a single sister the privilege of partaking in the comforts of his establishment, or the small fortune it was likely he should spare for her. Lady Caroline had of late found that the earl treated her with more kindness than usual; but this she imputed to the intervention of her brother, whom she described as a boy of such amiable dispositions, that he was justly the joy and hope of her existence.—“I fear,” said she, innocently, “I never loved my aunt as I ought to do; my father would, I think, prefer the sentiment of awe with which he inspires me to any other; but Frederick has my whole heart—it will never be so devoted to any other human being.”

“Never!” exclaimed the major, with a start of terror.

“I shall never have another brother, you know,” said Lady Caroline, simply—“bat—but—perhaps—if—if—”

The Spartan if was, in the major’s opinion, a very unimportant if, when compared with *this*; yet such was his extreme trepidation, that he dared not even look whether the eyes of the lovely girl seconded the confusion so evident in her speech; and terrible as he felt suspense to be, yet so many terrors assailed him, from the fear that another step might for ever annihilate his hopes, that he dared not give birth to the soft confession which trembled on his tongue; and alike unable to conceal his passion or avow it, he hastened from the apartment in the most distressing confusion.

Under these circumstances he bade adieu to the family; but as he received from the earl a most polite, and from Lord Ingleby a most urgent invitation to return very soon, he was the better enabled to tear himself from a house which held over him a species of magic bondage. It was happy for him that Lady Caroline communicated her adieus through the medium of her brother; but the tenderness of the youth’s adieu, and the striking similarity of his softened features to his sister’s, awoke the chord which vibrated through every nerve of the heart-stricken Theodore.

Major Sedgwood was now in his twenty-sixth year, a period when some of my young readers will think he was past the age of romance; others will, perhaps, think he has not arrived at that of dotage; and both may therefore conclude, that love in him would be a flame attempered by reason, cheerful enough to warm his heart, but not vivid enough to scorch it. To this I answer, that the major was, indeed, too far advanced in life to feel that hope which, in younger subjects, often supports its victim by fallacious food, and urges him on to deeds of folly and desperation. But his affection was more consolidated, his feelings more intense, from the perpetual contemplation of the difficulties of his situation, since they only led him to appreciate more highly the excellence of which they deprived him; and he returned to his circle, the complete picture of that pensive, yet not dejected, lover,

Whose leaden eye still seeks the ground;  
Whose tongue, chain’d up without a sound,

prefers wandering

Thro' trackless hills and pathless groves,  
Places which pale passion loves,

to the gayest scenes and liveliest companions, where the state of his feelings can neither be soothed nor appreciated. This air of tender melancholy was generally imputed to the loss of his mother, for whom he had been ever heard to declare that fervent attachment he really felt; for at this period of society it was believed consistent for men of gallant hearts, and even first rate understandings, to love their mothers, and therefore the major's sombre air awakened sympathy, where it might otherwise have excited ridicule. The ladies, whose sympathies are ever ready to console affliction, would willingly have reëchoed sighs to his, spent many a tender look, and many a sentimental harangue, upon him in vain, and were at last obliged to confess, that notwithstanding he was immensely handsome, and tolerably polite, yet he was absolutely insensible; since it was found, that neither the charms of beauty, even when combined with the lure of ambition, could effect his recovery, or awaken his pursuits.

The earl of Brooksbury, and his family, had set out for their Hampshire residence soon after the major took his leave. He heard frequently from Frederick, and every letter teemed with invitations to join them there; but they did not appear sufficiently guaranteed by the earl, his father, for a man of the major's description to avail himself of—"And wherefore should I go?" he would mentally exclaim; "I cannot offer poverty to Caroline; nor can I endure that the earl should say that I restored him one child to rob him of another."

Yet with all this reasoning, to resign that other was impossible; and there were many times when the unhappy Theodore was on the point of rushing on his fate, and ending a suspense he now found it as impossible to bear, as it had once been to end, when speaking was in his power.

Time passed, and the cold breeze of autumn whispered the return of that season which would restore Caroline to a place in which he could visit her with propriety. As he hastily walked up Picadilly one morning in November, consoling himself with this idea, his arm was hastily seized by a young man he did not immediately recollect, and who was too much out of breath to make himself intelligible. While he stood still, to enable the gentleman to recover himself, Theodore perceived that the person was no other

than the marquis of Blandington, who having adopted the dress of a man, which was, according to the fashion of that day, very distinct from that of a school-boy, he had not immediately recognised him; and when he did so, he could not forbear smiling at the metamorphosed appearance of the volatile lad into the embroidered *petit maitre*. "Ay, you smile," said the marquis, "and well you may, for a couple of years hence would have been all in good time for my sword and *solitaire*; as, however, I am indebted to you solely for the figure I cut in my present habiliments, you are the last who has a right to laugh at me for adopting them."

"To me, my lord? Really your conversation is as incomprehensible as your person."

"I apprehend so, but I will enlighten you. Know, then," he continued in a style of affected bombast, "most rev'rend, grave, and potent seignior, my very worthy and approved commander, that I, from a most unhappy circumstance, became possessed of a large fortune and an old title; and about the same time became excessively fond of Ingleby, because he soothed me when I was unhappy, without insulting my sorrow, by the insolent, commonplace cant of supposing fortune and independence could console me for my incalculable loss."

The marquis twinkled away a tear, and raising his voice, that it might conquer his sensibility, proceeded.

"Now it came to pass that I frequented the house of John earl of Brooksbury much at that time when the said John's daughter, having lost the only friend she had, returned to her father's mansion; but he saw her not, for his heart was with his son.

"Now the damsel was very fair; moreover, she was forlorn and sorrowful.

"So I piped unto the damsel, and played about her, and became unto her even as a lap-dog.

"And the thing pleased John the earl; and he said in his heart, 'I will that this youth espouse my daughter, for he hath flocks and herds, and much cattle, and he will not ask for a dowry at my hands; but he is yet young, and for a ~~time~~ shall my daughter tarry.'

"Then came there to the house of John a mighty man, yea, a man of much valour; and he was comely withal, having a sword upon his thigh, and a beard upon his chin;

yea, and there was wisdom in his words, and his speech was gentle, although his heart was very brave.

“Then said the damsel unto herself, ‘Behold this is a *man*, the like of which I have not beheld until this day.’

“And when he departed, her eyes, which were like unto the dove’s eyes, looked mournful in their meekness, and the rose waxed pale upon her cheek, and her lute was silent in the grove, and the voice of melody dwelt not on her lips.

“Then arose John earl of Brooksbyury, and he said unto me, ‘Boy, gird now thy sword upon thy loins, and command the hair of thy head that it become as the hair of the aged ones, yea, as the snow upon the mountains of Cambria, for behold thou hast numbered thy sixteenth summer, and thy days of Greek and flogging are at an end.’

“Then was I wroth in my heart, and I said, ‘Who is John, that he should beguile me? Have I not read the wiles of his heart, and know I not that his tongue is deceitful?’ But I remembered the dove-eyed maiden, and my heart warmed towards her; and behold her brother; is he not also my brother, yea, are they not as the light of my eyes unto me? So I consented unto his words, and arrayed myself; as thou perceivest, and I went straightway to the house of John; but behold the eyes of the damsel regarded me not, albeit that in my eyes her beauty was increased, and my heart yearned towards her with an abundance of love, for behold a flame was kindled.—But at what a monstrous rate you are walking to-day, major, you won’t hear my chapter out if you go on at this rate.”

“I believe I cannot have that pleasure to-day, my lord. I am—that is—I have an engagement.”

“I hope you have, major; for I wish you to promise me to visit immediately our dear Frederic; he is ill, very ill, and I am the only confidant of his complaints; and in reporting them to my tutor, I find they are of the most dangerous tendency; and as I am compelled to leave him, my only consolation during absence will be the knowledge, that in your superior skill and kindness he will find more than a compensation for the loss of his juvenile friend.”

“Going! whither then are you going, marquis?”

“The grand tour. It is premature, I grant; but you see the old earl will make me premature in every thing. Come, let us turn into this coffee-house: you will not see me again for a long time, and must indulge my request.”

Would I had never seen you! thought the major; you have, indeed, ended my suspense with a witness. He commanded himself sufficiently to say—"How long do you propose being absent, my lord marquis?"

"My lordship," said the youth, smiling at the grave tone and lengthened title with which he was greeted, "will be governed by circumstances, depending on the will of Lady Caroline Ingleby."

The major sat down—rose again—but his breathing was oppressed; he believed he had over-walked himself, so perforce he sat down again.

"Over-walked yourself, major; ay, that's true, I'm certain; you have half-killed me, beside breaking the discourse, and ruining the finest chapter of family chronicles that ever was heard, in the most critical part."

The major rose—"I must now wish you good morning."

"Indeed you must not. When a man is the hero of his own tale, and there is only one man upon the face of the earth to whom it can be related, depend upon it he will not part so easily with his auditor. I was going to tell you—but if you won't listen to eastern oratory, take my sad story in English poetry.

Like Phœbus sung the no less am'rous boy:  
Like Daphne she, as lovely and as coy.

In short, 'twas a plain case, that 'concealment, like a worm i'th' bud, preyed on her damask cheek;' of course, she loved; and as I began to find that was not the most easy of all sensations, and that it was plain one or other must find it in all its pains and penalties, I thought it would be more gallant that I should take that trouble than the lady; this consideration led me, as far as I was able, during such a very short campaign in the service of the blind archer, to trace the effects of his power, and I clearly discovered, by the aid of a little light afforded by Frederic, and a more brilliant one lent by my own jealousy, that 'you were the man.' I then saw my duty—no! *duty* is a cold word; for my love, my admiration of you, would have obtained the sacrifice, even if I had not owed you my life. Be that as it may, your way is clear; my work is now finished, for I shall leave England to-morrow."

"My dear friend! my noble boy! I cannot allow this; I have no words to express what I feel."



“I am *sorry* for you, for really if I did not chatter so fast, I should be very ill; my heart feels so big, as if it would choak me at times; and if I were not to amuse myself with talking, I know not how I should sustain it: but indeed parting with Frederick is—but you see what a woman it makes of me!”

The noble youth, in despite of the spirits he had hitherto rallied so successfully, burst into tears, and sinking on the major's shoulder, indulged the emotion till he became more calm, when he informed him that he had concerted every thing ready for his journey; that he should leave the kingdom in privacy, which he had arranged with his guardians; after which, a letter, through their means, would be delivered to the earl of Brooksbury, informing him, that peculiar circumstances, in which a female of high rank was concerned, would most probably induce him to remain on the continent many years, as they included an engagement of so binding a nature, that it was become absolutely impossible for him to form the honourable connexion with the earl's family he had once fondly contemplated.

“But will not this letter reflect upon you, my lord, in a way that—”

“Not at all; I have never spoken of love to Caroline; how could I be so presumptuous?”

“Then you have indeed felt the passion!” said the major, with an expression of the tenderest compassion in his countenance.

“Felt it! ay, or I should not have traced it as I have done in either of you. But no more of this; I know the earl, young as I am, perhaps better than you do; and I am perfectly well aware, that so long as any hope remained of bending the gentle Caroline to his projected contract, he would not allow her the liberty of choosing for herself; it has been his intention to precipitate my marriage with her, because there is a bill talked of in the house, to render the marriages of minors illegal; this subject has been repeatedly introduced in my hearing at his table, and he naturally concludes that I have taken advantage of the information given me at such times to enter into some sudden and ridiculous engagement. Be it so; his reflections on my conduct will give me no pain; those which are thus forced upon his own may be salutary, and will teach him, that cunning often defeats its own purpose. He has sought to take an unfair advantage of an inea-

perienced orphan, and to expose a most innocent and dutiful daughter to the evils which might arise to her, either from marrying a person whose character is unfixed, or whose affections might be alienated from her, when he discovered, in future life, the duplicity of her father. Who then can pity his disappointment, although

' To-morrow brings a frost, a nipping frost ;  
And while he thinks, fond, easy man, too surely,  
His blossoms are a rip'ning, nips the root,  
And makes him feel as I do.'

No! no! the earl deserves no pity, and his daughter deserves whatever devotion man can give. Now all I have to say farther is this; enable me to know my sacrifice has not been in vain; tell me that you are blest, and Caroline is happy: 'tis a sad thing to be only in one's seventeenth year; but I shall be of age some time, you know, and then you will honour me, by considering me your *friend*, will you not, major?"

"My *friend*!" cried Theodore, clasping the noble boy to his beating heart, "my *angel*! my PRESERVER!"

The day following saw the young marquis of Blandington on his way to Dover, under the care of a worthy man, to whom every thought of his generous heart was open, and who rejoiced in rescuing him from what he considered; very justly, a tie rendered improper by his extreme youth, notwithstanding the great merit of the lady; and especially as the extreme vivacity of his pupil proved him precisely the character who ought to be married rather *later* in life, instead of *earlier* than usual; and he was convinced, that a mind awakened, as Lady Caroline Ingleby's had been, to contemplate with admiration the matured graces and established virtues of Major Sedgewood's person and character, could never be able to descend to the amiable, but far inferior qualities of his beloved pupil, however promising they appeared in *his* eye.

A sentiment of delicate refinement, of which few minds are capable, prevented the major from calling on the earl of Brooksbury; notwithstanding his impatience to behold Lady Caroline, he dreaded lest she should read, in his eyes the happiness which the marquis's assurance of her partiality to him could not fail to inspire him with; and he trembled lest he should appear presumptuous in her sight. His rea-

son informed him he had still many obstacles to contend with, for who knew the number of rich and titled suitors which the earl still held in his eye as *dernier resorts*? but his feelings bade him bow only to the fair arbitress of his destiny; and a week had passed since his young friend had bade adieu to the white cliffs of his native shore, ere the major had courage to announce himself as a visitor in St. James's square, though many a time he had, like the lover in Shakspeare,

Sigh'd his soul towards the place  
Where Jessy lay that night.

#### CHAP. IV.

An unspotted life is old age.

ECCL. I. 15.

DURING this period of the "life of a lover," the major was most agreeably surprised by receiving a note from the earl, earnestly requesting the pleasure of his company to dine with them, saying, "that he should have had the pleasure of calling upon the major on his first arrival in London, but had been prevented by political engagements of the last importance; that he entreated the major to visit them, *en famille*, as frequently as possible; adding, that Ingleby was very delicate in his health, and so much attached to him, that he had it still in his power to bestow the most important obligations upon a family who were, and must ever remain, eternally his debtors."

The major was not long in obeying this summons; and the profuse thanks of the earl, the delighted fondness of Lord Ingleby, and the flattering confusion of Lady Caroline, made him complete amends for past anxiety and forbearance; but he was sincerely sorry to find that there was indeed a visible change in the person of that lovely boy, whose life he had only saved from sudden death, that it might be sapped by slow disease; he was now become taller, but so thin and fragile, as to appear scarcely like a being of earth's grosser mould, while on his transparent cheek sat the hectic

bloom, which assumes the tint of health, while it menaces decay.

It was observed by all the party, that Frederick had not appeared in such health and spirits for a month past, as during the time that Major Sedgewood had sat with them, and the major was pressed to return on the morrow; to-morrow and to-morrow came, and the major was assured that Frederick was better for every visit he made; but the major, in every visit, saw disease making such regular advances, that he was surprised how the earl and Lady Caroline could still allow hope to deceive them; alas! he had forgot that, in his mother's case, the same insidious power had prolonged her empire over his own heart, almost to the hour of dissolution; and they had not, like him, had any previous experience of the peculiar traits of pulmonary consumption. To tear the veil from their eyes would have been equally cruel to themselves and their patient, since it would have been absolutely impossible for them to have attended on him with that cheerfulness, or amused him with that animation, which was now become the only medium through which affection could benefit its object. Indeed, it appears the single blessing attending this lamentable disease, that it possesses, almost invariably, the power to cheat both the sufferer and his surrounding friends into expectations of relief, from an evil they are unable to meet with that steadiness and fortitude demanded from all who attend the sick bed of departing friends, and particularly those who are called to bid adieu to youth in its most interesting form, which is the most frequent case in this disease.

It was not in the nature of things that Major Sedgewood should every day behold that beautiful young creature, to whom he had given a heart as warm, as tender, and as faithful as ever warmed the bosom of any human being, constantly engaged in those tender offices which render woman a ministering angel below, without finding some moments in which to pour into her ear the homage of his soul, which, in these moments of tender anxiety, became doubly dear to her who had already felt the purest emanations of gratitude and esteem. Frederick was no stranger to the feelings of either, and though incapable of judging the extent of the major's sensations for his sister, yet, from the love he bore for each party, he judged of what each felt for the other—"I could not bear," said he, mentally, "to lose Caroline;

every thing she makes me (yes, ladies, seventy years ago an earl's daughter could make a thing for a sick brother) is so good, because she sits by me, and gives it me herself; and even the medicines are not so bad when Caroline pours them out. Then her voice is so sweet, and she reads to me so pleasantly; and when she prays by me, I feel assured that God will hear her, she is so pious and good. Altogether, I could do nothing without her; and the poor major loves her as well as I do; but she is not his sister, so he had better marry her, as I used to think Blandington would, till we found out she did not like him so well as Sedgewood; that seems the only way to bring us all together; and I see no reason against it at all; Caroline will always have a title, and the major has, in my opinion, got a very good one."

In the evening of that day in which these cogitations passed the mind of Lord Ingleby, as these dear objects of his solicitude were sitting nearly opposite the sofa on which he frequently lay, watching, as they hoped, his gentle slumber, and now and then casting towards each other a look, in which the purest love was mingled with the most cordial respect, he suddenly opened his eyes, and said—"Pray, now, wouldn't you two like to be married? Why don't you speak? there's no harm, I suppose, in it: for you know I know all about your love for each other. Well, to be sure, I've been told people in love looked mighty silly; but I had no notion any thing I could have said would have made the major so very queer. There, Caroline, you've ruined your netting, I see you have!"

Caroline threw the netting on the floor, and escaped out of the room, just as her brother burst into a laugh, and her father entered. To hear Frederick laugh was so delightful to the earl, who had not often had that pleasure lately, that, of course, he sprung forwards, regardless of his blushing daughter, and eagerly inquired, "what had made his dear Ingleby so merry?"

"They are always doing something to make me happy, father," said the youth; "and when they do not, I laugh at their expense. I have been proposing to the major there to marry Caroline, and they both fell a blushing, so I laughed at them."

"You are, my dear Ingleby, a privileged person, certainly," said the earl contracting his brow; "but you certainly went beyond even your prerogative here; Lady Caroline, I hope, will forgive you on her return; the major will have

the good sense to know that sick boys often talk nonsense."

Major Sedgewood foresaw that nothing but flight would save him from either giving or receiving offence; he was loth to give the former to the father of Caroline, and the latter he could not receive from *even* her father; so, hastily snatching his hat, he said he was quite happy to leave Lord Ingleby so much better, and bowing to the earl, he retired.

"I shan't be much better long, now he is gone," said the invalid, throwing his languid head again upon his pillow.

"My dear boy," said the earl, drawing his chair to the sofa, "surely you will consider the company of your *own* father—a father, too, whose only wish is your indulgence, a sufficient compensation for that of a stranger?"

"Stranger!" exclaimed the boy, again rising indignantly; "do you call Major Sedgewood a stranger? the man who at the risk of his own life preserved *mine*—a stranger! the man who, for the last three months, has forsaken every pleasure, at a season when pleasure is at its meridian, to sit by my couch, and unite to me the cares of a parent and a brother!"

Alarmed with the agitation that shook his son's emaciated frame, and the lambent fire that gleamed from his sunken eye, the earl, assuming his most persuasive intonation, said, "My dear boy, do not agitate yourself in this way; I do not mean to insinuate any thing to the major's disadvantage; he is a very respectable gentleman, but yet he is only a private gentleman, you know: and certainly, coupling your sister's name with his, the daughter of the earl of Brooksbury with the nephew of a country baronet, was not exactly as it ought to be. It was an improper jest, my dear, quite improper; it vexed me, I confess, and threw me off my guard, and—and—but I am certain you see the impropriety of it."

I know very well that many earls' daughters, and even dukes' daughters, have married Sedgewoods centuries ago, who, you must know, papa, were a family, and a great family, before the Brooksbury name was ever heard of; so, I think there is not much in that: perhaps you have not read about them in the baronetage; but I have; they were a powerful family in the days of Edward the Confessor, and possessed a right in their own domains almost regal; they were called Lords Searchwood, from their right over the

immense forests of Fairborough, which name is now, by corruption, become Sedgewood. The conqueror confirmed and increased their privileges. In the days of Stephen they built and fortified a strong castle; Edward the Second confirmed their charter of dispensing life and death within their own demesnes. In the wars of the roses, we find Hugh de Sergewood, and Ralph, his son, at the head of——”

A violent fit of coughing checked the youthful orator, and for a short time suspended the earl's attention, when his exhausted son laid down, unable to proceed in what he concluded his father would deem irrefragable proofs of Major Sedgewood's worth. That father replied to his foregoing observations, by saying, “that the major's family were certainly unexceptionable; that he was a fine young man, of excellent address, and might cut a figure in the lower house; but he rather thought his father was poor, very poor; and there was no living without money; Caroline would have little, very little; and, therefore, were he inclined to favour the major's addresses, he could not see what could be done.”

“You must help them, father, till I am of age, and then you know I can give them my mother's jointure.”

The earl did not answer, for his surprise was not of the most agreeable nature.

Lord Ingleby mistook his feelings—“My dear father, said he, “if you were poor, as I take it Mr. Sedgewood is, I then would do as the major I find does; I would not take my mother's jointure during the life of my father—no, not for all the wines in the world; but as you are very rich, and have only your poor Frederick to provide for, I think I should like to give that to Caroline, who is so good a nurse to me, and to the major, who saved my life.”

“Who told you the major did this?”

“Lambert, my valet; he comes from Fairborough, and he says he knows it for a fact from the late Mrs. Sedgewood's maid, who overheard her master and the major disputing about it before he bade his father farewell, and that the major got the better, and would make his father keep the money, at least till he married; and if ever that took place, which the old man thought not unlikely, he said he would accept of half of it.”

The earl remained some time in a kind of half sad and half sullen silence, while the lovely pleader, fatigued with

exertion, and still agitated by fear, looked wistfully in the face of that parent, who, from his earliest recollection, had never denied him a request; his good sense pointed out to him an immense difference between his present requisition and any of those things he had hitherto desired; but yet, when he considered the merits of the object, as they appeared in his eyes, he felt the impatience natural to an indulged, and especially a suffering child, to have his reasonable wishes granted; and he gazed upon the earl as if his whole soul were concentrated in his eyes, and would take its flight the moment it was repulsed. The earl was unable to bear these ardent glances; he rose, entreated Frederick to compose himself, and said he must give the matter very serious attention.

“My dear father, I cannot part with you in this suspense: something must be decided, or I perceive that I must see the major no more. Will you allow me to recall him? Will you allow him to hope for Caroline? May I flatter myself that the day will come that I shall call him brother?”

“No, Frederick, he can never be your brother,” said the earl, in a voice never before assumed to Frederick.

“Then I shall die,” said he, sinking back, with such a deadly paleness of features as appeared already to have verified the prediction; the earl, alarmed, rang for his valet, who entered, accompanied by Lady Caroline. The earl, though trembling for his son, cast a look of reproachful rage upon his daughter, which informed her but too well of what had been passing betwixt her father and brother; but she forgot her own feelings in the evident sufferings of her now speechless advocate, and flew to administer the usual remedies for exhaustion. As soon as Frederick was able to speak, he desired to be put to bed, saying—“He now felt *that* to be the only place for him.”

A night of increased fever and perturbation followed this scene, which was increased by the anguish felt by this most amiable and exemplary boy, for having offended his father, and the self-conviction that he had not submitted as he ought to the parental mandate; yet, when he beheld Caroline—when he thought of the dear major, he felt as if he had never said a thousandth part of the kind things which flowed to his tongue on their behalf. Universal trepidation seized his frame; the fever which had consumed him in the earlier part of the night was exchanged for cold shudder-



ings, which appeared to his agonized sister the immediate forerunners of death. In great alarm she sent for the physician, and went herself to the apartment of the earl, who, in reply to her information, bitterly reproached her as the occasion of her brother's increased indisposition; and she returned to him bathed in tears, and overwhelmed with a double portion of wretchedness.

The report of the medical attendant was precisely what might be expected—some circumstance, by occasioning mental irritability, had increased every bad symptom, which continued through the day following; in the course of which the weather, which had hitherto been favourable for the complaint, changed to a severe frost, which no artificial warmth could prevent from its usual effects. Before night the earl had acceded to every proposal of his son; had even despatched a note, in his own hand, in which he had, with wonderful facility ascribed the little acidity his *manners*, though, he *trusted*, not his *words*, had shown the preceding day to a vexatious occurrence in the cabinet, and entreated the major would favour his son's couch with another of those visits which never failed to be efficacious; hinting, at the same time, that his visits would be equally agreeable to his daughter and himself; and that so soon as his son's recovery should enable them to speak on more agreeable subjects, he should be happy to do it.

The major flew to the bedside of his young friend, shocked to see the ravages which sorrow, in so short a time, had made on his shadowy form. Sweetly consoling was the view of him to the suffering boy; and so happy was the effect upon his health, that as soon as he felt the major's hand clasped in his own, he resigned himself to repose, and, after sleeping several hours, awoke apparently invigorated and refreshed.

The earl perceived now that this redoubtable major held the life of his only son, the heir of all the honours of the Brooksbury domains, in his hands as effectually as he had done when he took the lifeless form from its watery grave, and bestowed upon it a first resurrection; and as his daughter had lost the title on which he had set his heart in the first instance; and he concluded a small dower would be sufficient to satisfy the enamoured Sedgewood, he very prudently made the best of a bad bargain, and allowed the major to enter into all the rights of his son-in-law elect, with

the single condition, that Lady Caroline must not marry till the restored health of her brother enabled her to do it with propriety—a condition that appeared extremely unnecessary, as she was incapable of omitting (by any temptation that affected herself) even the slightest mark of personal attention, and her cares to the sufferer had already extended so far as greatly to affect her own health, and sometimes, from that cause, to awaken extreme solicitude in her lover, though her father appeared utterly to disregard it.

But the days of Frederick were now numbered, for the little strength he had was exhausted in the conflict with his father, and the calm which followed was sweet, but deceitful; as if conscious himself of the inward change, which he sought to guard from those around him, he omitted no means in his power of giving his sister's engagement the utmost publicity it was capable of; and never failed informing all those friends of his father whose intimacy warranted their approaching his couch, that the matter was finally settled, and this more especially in his father's presence. The earl was much engaged in politics; and while ambition urged him to court power and accumulate riches, he suffered himself not to perceive that the cankerworm was destroying his root, even while his eager hands were plucking laurels to adorn the tree. One evening, on his return from a private audience with his sovereign, which had elevated him beyond measure, he was desired by his servant in waiting to hasten to the chamber of Lord Ingleby, who had desired to see him the moment he returned.

The pulse of Frederick beat very low, and his eyes had lost that radiance which had lighted their victim to the borders of the grave; his breathing had been difficult, and Major Sedgewood, seated on his bed, supported him in his arms, while Lady Caroline was chafing his cold hands gently between her own. A pensive smile illumed his lovely features as he perceived his father approach his bed, and he stretched out his right hand to receive him. The earl took it in speechless agony, for the sentence of death was written on that face, and it fell like an ice-bolt on the heart of the late exulting father: gently he raised that cold hand to his parched lips; it was then as gently withdrawn, and pointing directly to the face of Theodore, a faint voice distinctly said—"Father, behold thy son."

The earl dropt nearly lifeless on his knees by the bedside, and, for the first time in his life, found himself supported and embraced by his daughter; but one of her hands was still retained by Frederick, who made a faint effort to unite it with the major's; they perceived his desire, and instantly took each other's hand, on which those of the dying boy were laid; a faint murmur, as of prayer, was heard to issue from his lips, and an awful silence sat on all around. It ceased; yet in trembling anxiety each waited in breathless expectation, but not a sigh was heard; and Theodore found, from the lifeless corse upon his breast, that the pure spirit of this beloved boy had fled to the presence of its Creator.

## CHAPTER V.

He that imposes an oath makes it,  
Not he that for convenience takes it.

HUDIBRAS.

*all* To attempt describing the grief and disappointment of the earl at the loss he had sustained is impossible; it was severely felt by all who had known the amiable object; but the earl had a manner of making all around him participate in his afflictions, which, we believe, or, at least, fear, was not peculiar to his lordship, though nothing could be less calculated to relieve himself; he quarrelled with all around him, and seemed to imagine that the sorrow which stuck to him like the poisoned shirt of Hercules, could only be torn from his own burning skin by plastering the back of every unfortunate being who came in his way. His medical, his more immediate attendants were dismissed with opprobrium; and his patient daughter, who had been the most affectionate attendant of her dying brother, and, would have been the kindest consoler to himself, was the medium by which that anger, which in fact he nourished against the divine decree, found vent in the most cruel sarcasms, or the most bitter invectives; nor would the major have escaped his share of unmerited reproof, had he been in the way to receive it; but scarcely had he attend-

ed the lamented heir to the house appointed for all, when he was informed by his father, that finding his health extremely delicate, he had at length adopted the resolution of repairing, with his daughter, to the south of France, and should, in a few days, be in London, on his way thither.

Filial piety had ever formed too decided a part of the major's character, to allow him to neglect a parent so justly dear to him; he therefore not only paid the kindest attention to his father during his stay in London, but accompanied him across the channel, and so far on his tour as appeared necessary to *him*, and consistent with his own engagements in the earl's family. His prospects there were fully explained, and delighted the heart of a father, who was justly proud of a son, whose exaltation appeared to him to be only the natural reward of his superior excellence; for Mr. Sedgewood was literally a country gentleman of fine taste, retired manners, and nearly as ignorant of the world now, as at the time when he first entered it; he had himself married a woman whose fortune was much superior to his own, and who, for his sake, had refused many great offers, and who had to the end of her life persisted in pronouncing herself the happiest of women. This conduct did not excite in Mr. Sedgewood any undue opinion of his own merits; it only decreased his opinion of the influence of riches; and in supposing the earl of Brooksbury gave his daughter freely to his son, he concluded that the earl was a wise and liberal man; but he hoped there was nothing new in that. In fact, poor Mr. Sedgewood was an odd man in *those* days—he is incomprehensible in these.

During Major Sedgewood's absence, the earl had tasted of the cup of consolation; and though it was but a poor draught, yet it was better than nothing; and that inclination every human being has to accept any prop in the hour of sinking induced him to snatch it with eagerness proportioned to his wants. This cup was not presented to him by the hand of religion, for she requires patience and submission ere she bestows the balm of resignation; nor was it given by the hand of dutiful affection, whose incessant watchfulness sought to assuage his sorrows by increasing his comforts: no! it came in the shape of the duke of Roverton, who, although neither so spotless as the first, nor so fair as the last, was more efficacious than either.

“I condole with you most sincerely, my dear friend,”

said the duke, with a most affectionate squeeze of the hand; "your loss has been great, ay, very great, I confess."

The earl was really unable to reply; he could only bow; and he did bow.

"But your lordship has a daughter, whose children may perpetuate her father's honours, and who is so lovely, so very charming, that—"

"Your grace is pleased to flatter me; the poor girl has the merit of resembling the features of my son, and that is now the only consolation that is left me."

"Then your lordship must allow me to say you are an absolute stranger to your own treasures, whereas I had concluded you were a miser; Lady Caroline Ingleby is, in my opinion, a perfect paragon; I never remember to have seen so beautiful a woman; yet your lordship and I have seen many fine girls in our time."

"Your grace is many years my junior."

"A mere trifle; I think we might each of us take a wife, Brooksbury, without being laughed at for old fools by the boys of this day, hey?"

"That your grace might do it, there can be no doubt; but on this subject my mind has been made up many years. I shall never marry again."

The duke had been told as much before, but he wished to be satisfied on this point; having obtained such satisfaction, he again launched out into praises of Lady Caroline's fine person, and withdrew; but leaving behind him a ray of light which cheered the benighted mind of the bereaved earl of Brooksbury.

Lady Caroline received more attention from her father during their dinner hour than she ever remembered had fell to her share; her heart was affected and penetrated by it, and she redoubled her attentions to him; every overture towards familiarity which she ventured to make was received with kindness, and, for the first time, she ventured to whisper to herself, that her father had some affection even for her. She felt the value of this kindness more especially now, on account of the major's absence, and because she had found her father's austerity increased since her brother's death. With the eager hopes of youth, she fondly anticipated an entire change in the manners of her parent, and trusted she should henceforward supply the sad vacuum in his heart,

an obligation, even if it were dispensed by a monarch's hand."

So saying, the major withdrew in all the dignity of offended virtue; and as the last glance from his commanding eye beamed on the earl, he felt his own conscious inferiority so acutely, that even a review of all his titles, and their substantial accompaniments, failed to restore him to his wonted self-satisfaction. Humbled, yet enraged, he sat down, and, in suspended vengeance, listened to the last steps of the major as they fell heavily on the staircase; when the porter had closed the gates, the earl experienced instant relief; he rose, rang the bell, and ordered his daughter into his presence; but as if doomed to be tormented, she entered so sad, so pale, so wo-begone, that even his right honourable rage was abated by the first glance of her features, for they were again those of the dying Frederick; in a stern voice he bade her go to her room, and send for her physician; to this she would have replied, but by an imperative motion of his hand, silence was imposed, and the heart-stricken Caroline retired.

The earl felt assured that his children sickened and died on purpose to vex him, and he therefore concluded himself the most miserable of all fathers. Extreme misery ever presents the desire of removal; and the earl, therefore, gave instant orders for that of his family immediately leaving London for one of his mansions in the north of England. Great bodies move slowly, and it was not the fashion of that day for coronetted coaches to move with the celerity of mail-coaches; but the earl was seized with a flying mania, and the slowness of his servants' motions, as they appeared to him, served for an admirable excuse for the raging anger in which he now freely indulged. It was doubtless the general opinion of his household, that he was carrying Lady Caroline into the country to keep her from eloping with the major, towards which consummation of the affair each was willing to lend a helping hand; and so soon as the earl allowed himself to comment upon the appearance of this suspicion, he favoured the idea, though he protested he did it for the sake of his daughter's health. The fact was, that he had a just reliance upon the delicacy of his daughter's mind, and the firmness of her principles; he knew that, ill as he had used her, she would not conceive his unkindness could justify her disobedience, especially at a time when

his heart was still bleeding from the recent loss of her brother; and he was confident that no solicitations of the major could induce her to marriage, much less clandestinely, during the period of her mourning.

When the major arrived at his lodgings, he found that the "pomp of words," with which he had endeavoured to fortify his heart during his walk home, had left that heart cold, languid, and wretched. The fate of Caroline, meekly enduring for him the cruel taunts and haughty menaces of her father, rose before him, and he felt for a moment as if it were his duty to resign all claims to her that might interfere with her peace: but, then, should she become another's?—the thought was agony beyond all human endurance.

To trace the sufferings of each party is utterly out of my power; Caroline, who could not be intimidated by the *threats* of her father, though divided from her lover, and unable to learn his sentiments, farther than as she read them in her own heart, was, at length, softened by the *apparent* affliction of her father. The earl had found, in his own case, the efficacy of a pale face and a sick bed to make him forego his purpose; he therefore adopted it in turn; and after declaring that the death of one child, and the obstinacy of the other, would break his heart, he shut himself up in his chamber, and denied himself to all but his physician.

It was well known to the earl's family that he had laboured many years under an inward complaint, which, although not immediately dangerous, rendered him incapable of any extraordinary degree of exertion; that he should suffer, therefore, after a hasty journey, was not in the least degree surprising; nor was it possible that the severe grief, followed by anger, which of late had agitated the earl, could escape making the ravages common to such companions; and it was therefore no wonder that Caroline's pity and concern were deeply excited, when, after her services had been repeatedly rejected, she was at length admitted to the sick bed of her father.\*

Affliction appeared to have softened every harsher emotion in the earl; he addressed his child with great tenderness, and without adverting to the past, seemed only anxious to ensure her tenderness for what he called the short remnant of his future days; he even condescended to lament that he had not hitherto been so kind a parent as he ought to have been; and said, in a tone of the most distressing

self-reproach, that Heaven had punished him by a stroke which had been at once his scourge and his cure, by opening his eyes to the blessing which was left to him in a kind and tender daughter.

The earl seldom spoke of Heaven; and his daughter, while deeply penetrated with grief for his sorrow, heard with pious joy that his heart was thus led by affliction to look to the hand that in mercy had chastised him; she endeavoured to assure him of her love and duty, and entreated him to permit her to become his constant attendant.

By degrees the tender heart of his child was drawn towards him, by a confidence rendered sweeter from the new sensations it inspired; and at the moment when the earl perceived that her pity for his sufferings, and her sense of obedience to his will, and love for his person, were all most strongly melting her heart and disposing it to his views, he once more mentioned the tacitly-proscribed name of Major Sedgewood, and in the most soothing tones he could assume, besought her to relinquish a connexion which was altogether improper for her, and which would destroy her father.

Lady Caroline said she considered herself bound by the most solemn ties to consider Major Sedgewood her future husband; but she did not wish to precipitate her union; she would, if possible, reconcile her love for the major with that she felt for her father, and—

“Then,” exclaimed the earl, with an anxious impatience, which, by agitating his frame, inspired the mind of Lady Caroline with the most alarming ideas for his health, “promise me that you will not marry Sedgewood till he is in possession of his uncle’s title:—a short, perhaps a *very* short time may suffice for this; and, during the interim, my mind will have inured itself to contemplate the subject; and, should I be spared so long, to endure, nay, even to rejoice in it. Sir Charles Sedgewood is older than I am, and, they tell me, terribly afflicted with the gout.”

Caroline was silent: a vague recollection passed her mind of having heard one of the servants say to another, that he had heard bad news of Sir Charles Sedgewood; it was the Yorkshireman formerly mentioned; the words caught her ear as he was delivering some soup that morning to the earl’s own valet; this she concluded was the more immediate cause of the earl’s entreaty, as it was not improbable that



the name of Sedgewood reaching his ear had induced *him* to make those inquiries she did not feel authorized to do, when the words were uttered at the earl's chamber door in the morning; this request did not therefore appear unnatural or constrained in the earl, and the beseeching look with which it was reiterated entirely subdued her; yet, neither unmindful of her promise to Theodore, nor unmoved by the painful image of prolonged absence, already so irksome and heart wounding as she had found it, she answered by saying—"But will you, then, my lord, promise not to oppose my union, and promise in a way that it is impossible to retract?"

"Alas!" said the earl, "short as that time may be, Caroline, from what I now feel there is little probability that my consent will then be wanting; I shall then sleep with my poor boy, and the last Brooksbury will be forgotten. But if it will satisfy you, my love, I will take the most solemn oath, in that case, to sanction your union."

The nearer the earl approached the goal at which he was aiming, the more terrible became the trepidation he experienced; his bosom heaved with convulsive sobs; his anxious eyes appeared starting from their sockets, and his cheeks assumed an ashy paleness: with the most dreadful solemnity, he called on God to witness the oath he made, and pour on his devoted head the vials of his wrath, if, in one jot or tittle, he deviated from his awful promise. Having spoken, the earl, seizing the hand of his trembling daughter, called upon her to repeat his words.

Lady Caroline faintly articulated—"It was impossible."

"Wretch! accursed wretch! canst thou see thy parent thus supplicating thee for a *moment's* peace—a transitory cordial to his agonized heart, and in such a moment as this deny it him? Then may the last accents of thy only parent meet thy ears to blast thee, and the husband thou hast chosen! may—"

The horrible countenance the earl assumed in this moment of terrible transition from sorrow to rage, blended in it all that was appalling in death and diabolical in madness. The terrified girl, sinking on her knees, motioned him for a moment's respite; he ceased, and received the agonized accents which bespoke the dreadful promise he had dictated; but nature could go no further; and the

moment this dreadful effort was passed, she sunk breathless on the floor.

A dreadful pang shot through the heart of the earl, and a cold sweat bedewed his forehead : the end he had so ardently laboured to attain was arrived, yet the joy he had promised himself followed not his success ; so terrible were the sensations he experienced, that for some minutes he doubted whether the hand of that awful monarch, with whose name and terrors he had been taking such unwarrantable liberties, was not *really* upon him, and the consciousness that such a fact would be the just retribution for his dissimulation ; for, although he had really suffered to a certain degree, and was thought by some of his attendants, beside his own daughter, to be in a bad way, such a thought had never entered his own head : dying was, of all others, the thing to which he had an insuperable objection ; and on that solemn night, when he was called to witness the last moments of his son, the face of death, though drest in angel smiles to that meek soul, was a source of as much distress to the earl as even the eternal separation to which it condemned him.

The moment he was able to summon his fellow creatures about him, the earl felt relieved ; for they seemed in some degree to banish the consciousness of that all-seeing eye, which alone had witnessed his late conference ; he gave immediate orders for the removal of Lady Caroline, and told his valet and housekeeper to remain with him, and endeavour to amuse him.

Lady Caroline was soon restored ; and on being left to the composure of her own chamber, and to the liberty of prayer and meditation, she was enabled to find some consolation, under the idea that she had satisfied her father's mind, without destroying her own hopes of eventual happiness. She could not reflect without horror on the turbulent and vindictive passions which had swayed her father's breast at that awful period when he appeared likely to be called to the bar of heaven ; and she fondly hoped that now she had appeased these unholy fires, by a submission which had cost her so very dear, a happier frame of temper would arise ; and that her hand might be appointed to lead her returning father to the throne of grace, during that period when she had not any other claimant on her cares ; she trusted that a tender correspondence with her

Theodore would now be permitted to her, and would relieve the pangs of absence, and the sickness which arises from hope deferred ; and that although joy was denied to her, yet resignation would soften the thorns of her sorrow.

The day following, to her great surprise and comfort, the earl quitted his room, and requested her company to take a short airing. As he was so much better, Lady Caroline conceived the design of finding, from some of the servants, what had been the nature of the bad news respecting Sir Charles Sedgewood ; but on questioning the earl's valet, he positively denied having received any communication, and the servant whom she had heard speak to him was sent to Hampshire. Confident as to what she had heard, it immediately struck her that Sir Charles Sedgewood was really dead, and the silence of the major confirmed her in the idea ; for although she knew that every person in the house had been strictly charged on no consideration to bring her a letter or message, yet as she had, during the first weeks of their parting, received several kind mementoes from her lover, she still hoped that she could only be prevented from doing so by some extraordinary circumstance.

While these things crossed her mind, she remembered, for the first time, that the life of the major's father must intervene between his possession of the title and the death of his uncle, and her heart recoiled at the promise she had given, since it had made the happiness of her lover incomplete, till the death of a parent he had ever tenderly loved ; but even on this subject hope still whispered peace ; she had heard so much said of the character of Mr. Sedgewood, that she could not help hoping he would resign his rights in favour of a son so singularly situated, and so fondly beloved.

While Lady Caroline was thus fondly building hope on the wreck of happiness, the duke of Roverton arrived, as he said, on a visit to the earl, of whose health he had heard the most alarming accounts, and was therefore unable to deny himself the satisfaction of personal inquiry. His grace was by no means an unwelcome visiter to Lady Caroline ; for, as he was become of late so much the bosom friend of her father, she concluded he would soon hear all that had passed on the subject of her engagement ; and, of course, concluded, if he had ever been weak enough to think of marrying such a girl as her, that, his hopes being con-

pletely cut off, it was foolish to give her the trouble of refusing him.

Contrary to her expectations, however, the duke lost no opportunity of paying her the most courtly attention, yet without making any immediate advances; this conduct in a short time lulled all her fears, and his society became pleasant to her; she began to hope he would become her friend, and that through him she should again hear of the major, whose letters she was convinced were intercepted. At this period only one newspaper found its way to the mansion of the earl, and it did not contain any of those important informations relative to the world of fashion which could satisfy her inquiries; so that she sometimes fancied he was gone to France, sometimes that he was attending his dying uncle, and sometimes that he was hovering near her, but was unable to see her; she never, however, doubted that he continued unshaken in his fidelity, unchanged in his affection.

One morning, just after breakfast, the duke having received his letters, which he begged permission to open in her presence, expressed some surprise, by the usual exclamations of, "Umph! surprising! who would have thought it!" as he perused one of them; on which the earl observed, "I am glad to see your grace amused by your correspondent's information of this morning."

"I am so, indeed; 'tis a droll account of the wedding of a Yorkshire baronet, with an account of his bride's paraphernalia, and the provision made for the ten children she expects to have, though the youthful bridegroom has seen fifty-five; but he is a fine hale fellow, save a smack of the gout, which, indeed, will lengthen his life. I don't wonder at the girl taking him, for he was thought devilish handsome at college; we used to say Sir Charles Sedgewood was the Yorkshire Apollo."

Lady Caroline did not faint; she rose from her chair, and left the room with a stately step and a majestic countenance; but when she arrived in her own apartment, the nerve that appeared to have sustained her gave way, and she sunk upon the floor in a state to which insensibility would have been a blessed relief. Was this then the "bad news" the honest man, anxious for the major's welfare, had communicated, and which had led her father to adopt a system of the most refined treachery, the most barbarous mean-

ness that was ever acted on a tender heart, in the very moment, too, when that heart was bleeding for his wounds, and willing to sacrifice its happiness to his prejudices? Yes, it was too plain that she had been the victim of a scheme; and she had no doubt but her Theodore was in some situation suffering, at least, anxiety equal to her own. The sense of the deep injustice she sustained awoke indignation, which for a short time overcame the sense of sorrow, and made her determine, at all risks, to learn the fate of her "bosom's lord;" her pure ingenuous mind, which would hitherto have scorned the idea of tampering with the integrity of a servant, or even disobeying the implied will of her parent, now felt as if the ties that bound her were all dissolved, save that awful bond which was the register Heaven held, as the renunciation of her happiness, and of her father's honour. Artless as she was, she could not doubt but a scheme existed between her designing parent and the duke, which she apprehended the late suavity of her manners towards a man whose age made her naturally look up to him for protection, had induced them to develop more speedily than they had first intended. Her conjecture was not wrong; for after giving a few hours to what they conceived would suffice for the workings of disappointment, in a mind which they hoped was already weaned by absence from its object, she received a letter from the duke, making her a most splendid offer of his hand, and such arrangements for her future appearance in life as were calculated, in his eyes, to awaken at least her ambition, which he had found, in many women, a passion not uncommonly built on the ruined structure of disappointed love.

Lady Caroline was by nature meek, and from principle humble and obedient; but her mind was strong, and her feelings exquisitely acute. The youthful predilection which circumstances had led her to form with a handsome and accomplished man, had been, on her second intimacy with him, confirmed by her admiration and esteem for his many virtues; and when at length it had received her parent's sanction, had become, in habit as well as sentiment, so interwoven with every idea of her mind, and feeling of her heart, that it became a part of her existence. In the presence of her dying brother, she had, for his satisfaction, given and received the most tender, and to her most solemn, assurances of fidelity; and although she had been led to delay the ful-

filment of actual marriage, in obedience to her father's request, yet the idea of even his daring to absolve the contract had not entered her mind. As she read and re-read the letter of the duke, every passion that could agitate a human being rose to her mind, and agitated her almost to frenzy: at some moments she felt that she should be justified in flying to the major, wherever he might be found, and in beseeching him to place her under the care of his father in France; but her total ignorance of his situation precluded this plan, which her delicacy condemned, while her anger and her love approved it: while these thoughts rushed to her brain, she was interrupted in her reverie by a letter from her father, in which he not only urged her to accept, with all due gratitude, the noble offer of his friend, the duke of Roverton, but begged to inform her that Major Sedgewood was already acquainted that such had been her determination; in consequence of which he had left the kingdom, and would probably ere this have reconciled himself to any trifling disappointment he had received, by the selection of some more suitable bride.

"Left the kingdom!" exclaimed Caroline, as her eye flashed over the detested characters, "left the kingdom, under an impression of my falsehood!—Infamous! oh, most infamous duplicity!—Where is the earl—the earl of Brooksbury, I mean, for I have no longer a father?—tell me, I say, where can I find the earl?"

The servant to whom this question was addressed was so thunderstruck by the imperious tone in which it was uttered, by lips that till now were never opened but in gentleness, and still more so by the look of agonizing sorrow which accompanied them, that he could scarcely answer: but when Lady Caroline exclaimed—"Where shall I find him?" it immediately struck the man that it was his duty not to permit her approach at this time to the earl, as he had perceived the family of Lord Egerton approaching the breakfast parlour as he left it with the letter; and knowing the estimation of that excellent family, not only in his lord's house, but in every other where they were known, he justly concluded that it would be particularly desirable to prevent their witnessing the present situation of Lady Caroline. In most respectful terms he mentioned Lord and Lady Egerton's arrival, with their son, the honourable Colonel Saville, and two visitants of theirs; he therefore pre-

sumed her ladyship had better not descend into the breakfast parlour immediately.

"I have been long surrounded by demons," said Lady Caroline, exultingly, "but I now rush to the presence of assembled angels;" so saying, she fled past the man, whom a united sentiment of terror and compassion prevented from detaining her, and with the letters of the duke and the earl in her hand, ran impetuously into the breakfast parlour where the party were seated, and were at that moment making the tenderest inquiries after her health.

The wild and haggard air that agitated her whole frame, the deadly paleness and alternate flushes of her countenance, and the manner in which she held the letters, her total absence of all forms of good manners, as they were held at that day, petrified and shocked the whole group, who imagined she was seized with sudden madness, as they could in no other manner account for an appearance so singularly opposed to that she had ever exhibited, which was meek and retiring, even to timidity; but every feeling was now absorbed in *one*, and rushing forward to Lady Egerton, she dropt on her knees before her, and seizing her hands, which she pressed to her forehead and her heart, she exclaimed—"Oh, Lady Egerton! dear, excellent lady, the friend of my mother and my aunt, have mercy upon me, I beseech you; I have no longer a mother or a friend, in the wide, wide world!"

The earl, astonished and confounded, flew towards his daughter, endeavouring to raise her, and to apologize for a conduct equally novel and indecorous, and which, he protested, "it was utterly out of his power to comprehend;" but the high-wrought feelings of a mind so completely wounded beyond its power of endurance, were not now to be restrained by common barriers; the agitation she endured rose almost to frenzy, and assumed the commanding mien of madness, blended with the deepest subjugation of distress. In a tone of despair, and with that striking energy of language which is given by the inspiration of sorrow and injury, she briefly recapitulated the most striking circumstances attendant on her connexion with Major Sedgewood, the manner in which she had been induced by her father solemnly to postpone her engagement with him until his possession of the family honours, and which she now saw was a mean advantage taken of her feelings, in a moment

when her heart yielded to the dictates of duty and affection, and which had doubtless been represented to her lover in such a manner as to induce him to consider her worthless and perjured, and to fly from a country she had rendered hateful to him. In concluding this striking appeal to their feelings, she again fell upon her knees, and, with uplifted hands, besought the great Ruler of heaven and earth again to register that vow which indissolubly pronounced her the wife of Theodore, and of him *alone*, however separated; and repeated the horrible invocation she had so lately learnt, if she dared to become the wife of another.

The earl and the duke, in equal astonishment, gazed at each other, and felt how completely "a plain tale could put them down," though from a "puling girl," while the tenderest compassion and the most ardent indignation by turns affected the hearts of the rest of the party. Lord Egerton was the father of one amiable son, whom he had often wished to see the favoured lover of Lady Caroline, but whose professional engagements had kept him from seeing her, until his heart had formed another attachment, equally worthy, though not yet declared to the world. He, together with his lady, had often visited the sick couch of Lord Frederick Ingleby, and were well acquainted with the engagement of his sister; and though they knew too well the probable change of the earl's conduct towards the major, yet they could not suspect that it would have led him to such dishonourable lengths, since it appeared to them that he had not only destroyed the peace, but unsettled the reason, of his only daughter, for whom they were so truly sorry, that Lady Egerton entreated Lady Caroline's return with her as a means for tranquillizing her spirits. The earl had not the power to refuse; for the consciousness that Lord Egerton must learn, and would detest his conduct, stripped him at once of the proud superiority of rank he held, and made him timid, meek, and conciliating, even though the duke, his friend, stood at his right hand—such is the dignity of virtue.

Before Lady Caroline had reached Thorp Hall, the mansion of her new protectors, Lady Egerton trembled lest she had been too precipitate in removing her; she became evidently more feverish and ill every moment; and it was found necessary to send for a physician immediately on their arrival, who no sooner saw her than he pronounced her in a most alarming state of fever.



For several weeks a dreadful delirium disturbed the senses of Lady Caroline, and a consuming disease wasted her frame; often did her soul tremble on her pale lips, as if ready and anxious to take its flight to that fair spirit which had preceded her, and whose beckoning hand her frenzied fancy told her was ever luring her away. Yet still an idea of her lover, entreating her to return and live for him, seemed to intrude on the departing spirit, and delay its flight. At these moments she would sometimes pour out such unpremeditated strains of harmony in irregular verse, suited to the feelings of the moment, as astonished, delighted, and yet harrowed the heart of every one who approached her; but gave her an interest in the bosoms of her friends, which was as powerful as her claims, and as tender as her heart, and which death only had the power to dissolve.

During this melancholy period, the earl paid those occasional visits to Thorp Hall which decency called for on his daughter's account, and which he wished to improve to his advantage by inducing a belief that she was actually in a state of madness when she threw herself on the protection of Lady Egerton; and that her accusations of him, the extraordinary oath she took, and the entire change of character which took place in her that morning, were all corroborations of this melancholy truth. Lord and Lady Egerton readily admitted that delirium was indeed visible in their young friend, but there was at that time method in her madness, which spoke from whence it sprung; and giving the two letters into the earl's hand, which his daughter in her confusion had still retained open in her hand on leaving home, they remained silent, thus giving him a proof that they were not deceived as to the causes of his daughter's illness, and yet not affording him a pretext for discontinuing his visits, and allowing the claims of his child.

Youth, aided by tenderness and skill, overcame the fever under which Lady Caroline suffered; and dreadfully as she was reduced, her friend had the sweet satisfaction to perceive that some degree of strength was restored to her languid frame, and that her mind, to a certain degree, regained its powers; but a deep and settled melancholy pervaded her once animated features; she never spoke farther than by monosyllables, in answer to her friends; and the only signs she gave of recognising those she had pleasure in seeing, was by a smile so melancholy, that it seemed like the

blossom of affection springing from the root of despair. It was the opinion of the good physician who attended her, that her memory was perfectly restored, and her judgment unimpaired; and that whenever she obtained the power of weeping freely over her sorrows, and of speaking of Major Sedgewood, the most salutary effects might be expected; and he therefore wished her to remain under the immediate eye of Lady Egerton, as the only person to whom her grateful heart and gentle nature would ever be enabled to speak in confidence. He likewise recommended travelling as likely to amuse her; and particularly requested that she might not return to the house, or especially not visit the apartment, where her mind had received the shock that first overpowered it. To these propositions the earl made no objection; he had no inclination to see a dumb statue at his table, whose silence spoke volumes to his recollection; and he readily and politely closed with Lady Egerton's proposition that she should remain her guest; and as she proposed travelling on her account, he readily accorded every facility within his power; and this point once settled, the earl having quite as little taste for his present residence as the invalid herself could have, he quitted the country for the metropolis, where, in the bustle of politics, he endeavoured to lose the sense of his double disappointment; but he found his health at times so extremely indifferent that he was obliged to yield to its demands; but, alas! his sick pillow was strewn with thorns; and at these times, when he most courted repose, he most sensibly found it was fled from him forever.



## CHAP. VI.

Oh! let me join  
Grief to thy griefs, and echo sighs to thine.

POPZ.

ONE of the visitors of Lord Egerton, on that eventful day which had drawn him to the earl of Brooksbury's, was well acquainted with the character of Major Sedgewood, and was not personally unknown to him; this gentleman (Sir Thomas Frankland) was a gay young man, but pos-

essed humanity and honour; the scene he witnessed severely affected him; and as it was impossible for him to convey any assistance to the suffering lady, who was soon after declared to be in the most imminent danger, and as *to do nothing* is a case the young and active find too difficult to engage in, he determined, if possible, to find out Major Sedgewood, give him the particulars which had come under his own notice, and assist him in bringing the earl to account, though in what way this could be done the ardent baronet was not well able to imagine, all things considered, he confessed.

As Major Sedgewood had not been seen in London since the time when the earl of Brooksbury had quitted it so suddenly, it was generally believed that he had followed his father to France, where the unexpected marriage of his uncle would, by completely disgusting him with his English connexions, induce him to remain, unless the situation of his country occasioned his presence professionally. On the strength of this information, Sir Thomas actually set off for Nice, where he learnt Mr. Sedgewood resided; at Amiens he met with the marquis of Blandington; and as Englishmen are always glad to meet with each other, though but slightly acquainted in England, (from the extreme youth of the marquis,) yet a considerable intimacy ensued; and the baronet, in the course of conversation, mentioned his intention of pursuing his journey to Nice with all possible expedition, as he was anxious to meet Major Sedgewood there.

“I will go with you to the Antipodes, if the sight of the major will reward my toil!” exclaimed the marquis; “But what is the lucky rogue doing there? This is the time, or nearly so, that he ought to be at home, performing an enraptured benedict’s duties.”

The baronet, glad to find a person acquainted with the engagement, related all he knew of the affair, and saw, with surprise, the terrible impression it made on his youthful auditor, who swore, sung, raved, and stormed alternately, in a manner that proved how nearly his own heart was still interwoven with all that affected Caroline. They set out together for Nice; but on their arrival found that Mr. Sedgewood was at present a stranger to the place where his unhappy son resided; all the letters he had received from him for many months had indicated marks of a disturbed, unhappy

mind, but had imparted his sorrow in too general terms to enable his anxious parent to judge of its nature, farther than to surmise that it was a tender disappointment. Sir Thomas related, of course, all that had come under his knowledge, and the warm interest he took in the affair, which was, indeed, sufficiently evident from the long journey he had taken to serve a man to whom he was personally unknown. He now began to repent his own folly, in not making those inquiries after the major which a less impetuous temper would have pointed out as indispensable, acknowledging that he had only set out for France on the strength of general report, and that it was probable the major might be visiting his native county at the very time the circles of fashion had sent him to Nice.

"That I am certain," replied Mr. Sedgewood, "cannot possibly be the case, as my brother declares he has married because all his family were dispersed, and he was lost for want of a friend. Poor man," he continued, "the wife he has taken is little likely to supply his loss, further than as she will be a good nurse to him when he is laid up by the gout; and as she is our distant relation, a person his own equal in years, and much attached to Theodore, I regret that the state of his mind has been such as to prevent his visiting those whose cordial sympathy at least would not have been wanting; for though my new sister is a woman of few words, and confined notions, she has a good understanding and a feeling heart."

"Infamous plotters!" exclaimed Sir Thomas, as he recollected the circumstance Lady Egerton had mentioned, of the duke's letter containing an account of this wedding, and which had escaped Lady Caroline in her wanderings, with a chain of circumstances too regular to be deemed the effusion of delirium, and which she had therefore communicated to her family.

This incident, added to his vexation on reflecting on the wild-goose chase he had taken, made Sir Thomas resolve to return as suddenly as he came; although Mr. Sedgewood gave it as his decided opinion, that the report of his son's travelling was true, it being now near two months since he had received a letter from him; that it was probable he had gone into Switzerland, as it was a place for which he had an uncommon predilection; and he now hoped he should hear from him soon, as he never failed to write when it was possible; therefore, he could not rationally assign

any other reason for not having received his letters, than those which may be accounted for from change of situation.—“Theodore,” said the fond father, “has a mind too regulated to allow any grief to afflict the friends who love him, farther than as they participate, by sympathy, in his sorrows.”

“Ah! ’tis fine talking,” cried the baronet, “of minds being attemperèd, when such a mind as they tell me this sweet girl possessed is thrown off the hinges. By Heaven! if your son is not as mad as she is I shall regret running after him; but if he is, I shall glory in him—he shall command my fortune and my life.”

Tears of gratitude bedimmed the eyes of Mr. Sedgewood as he shook Sir Thomas’s hand at parting; he would willingly have returned to England with them, but from the conviction he felt that his son was really journeying on the continent, and that he should shortly hear from him, and that at any hazard it was desirable that *his* inquiries should be pursued in France, while Sir Thomas was kindly searching for his son in England; and that such search might be made with more effect, he presented the baronet with various letters of introduction to his brother and other friends of the family. Thus provided, this generous volunteer in the cause of an unknown friend was desirous of leaving Nice as soon as possible, to which the marquis of Blandington observed—“He could not possibly object; but as he had made no bargain to return with him, and found himself extremely happy where he was, (save the anxiety he felt for his friend, the major, and still more that which touched his heart for Lady Caroline,) and as his tutor had no objection, he purposed remaining there some months longer.”

Sir Thomas Frankland perceived that the daughter of Mr. Sedgewood had at least divided the heart of this amiable youth with her brother; but as she was a very lively engaging girl, he thought his fellow traveller might bestow himself worse, especially at a time when the vivacity he so eminently possessed might be of use to the spirits of her excellent father. He therefore hastily retraced his steps, was favoured in his passage, and in less than ten days presented himself at the seat of Sir Charles Sedgewood, where he was received with old English hospitality, but found not the object of his search, which so many concurring circumstances appeared to render so totally out of his power, that

he accepted the baronet's invitation to remain with them for some weeks. As, however, it was no part of this gentleman's character to be stationary, in less than a fortnight he was on his road for Bath; and Lord Egerton's being very little out of the way, he stepped aside, not only to show his respect for a family he loved, but to inquire particularly after the interesting sufferer, whose situation had affected him so much, and caused him such useless, though indefatigable exertion.

Sir Thomas was received with the usual hospitality by the family, and now found Lady Caroline in the mitigated, but still hopeless, state of suffering we have described. When he informed Lady Egerton how he had been engaged since their parting, she informed him, that it was her full persuasion that Major Sedgewood, wherever he might be, was certainly happier than he could be if the actual state of Lady Caroline was known to him; and as there was no hope of their union, she thought it would be cruel to bring them to an interview, which might be almost heart-breaking to him, and would probably again unsettle the little returns of reason evinced by Caroline.

After this conversation had taken place, Sir Thomas proposed proceeding one stage farther that night, as the evening was remarkably fine, and the moon nearly at the full, and set out, notwithstanding the solicitations of the family. On emerging from the near environs of the park, the sweetness of the surrounding scene, pensive thoughts arising from the preceding subject of discourse, and some tender recollections connected with the history of his own feelings, occasioned Sir Thomas to check his horse, to indulge in the train of thought which was thus awakened, at the same time that he bade his servant ride forward and order his supper and bed: he had not proceeded far when he observed a man emerge from a neighbouring thicket, who, abruptly crossing his path, sprang over the opposite fence, and thus entered the park which surrounded Thorp Hall, to which he advanced by rapid steps; there was something in his air which formed so perfect a contrast to his habit, that it was impossible not to notice him; for his dress, as he crossed the path, was that of a mere peasant, and his agile step, and even dignified gait, were those of the finished gentleman, and at that period the line of distinction was more strongly marked than it is in the present; it therefore in-

stantly struck Sir Thomas that this disguise must be assumed for a purpose inimical to the welfare of the friends he had left: ever rapid in his conceptions, he spurred his horse, leaped the same barrier the stranger had done, and overtook him in the course of five minutes; on seeing him, the man endeavoured to shun him, by taking a byway, that appeared too narrow for the horse, as it wound through a partial plantation; on seeing this, the baronet called out that "he was determined to follow him, go which way he might, and would leave his horse rather than permit his escape."

"And by what right do you presume to intrude on my privacy?" said the man, stepping back, and grasping more firmly the cudgel in his hand.

"Right, indeed! but I am not mistaken, I find; I am confident you are not the person you would appear to be; and your words, insolent as I conceive them to be, confirms me in the supposition; and I must be allowed to say, wherever I perceive mystery, I suspect guilt."

"Probably," returned the man; "for guilt is allied to suspicion."

The baronet was ever hasty; fired with the tone as much as the words now uttered, he sprang from his horse, and would have collared his affronter, who parried his efforts by the cudgel he held, but forbore striking him; in doing this the large hat he wore was thrown off, and the moon shone full upon a countenance of most manly beauty, shaded by a profusion of fine brown hair, that fell in disorder on the forehead, and contributed to give an expression of melancholy grandeur to a face which he felt to be not wholly unknown to him; in an instant recollection rushed upon his mind, and he exclaimed—"Good God! do I not behold Major Sedgewood?"

The stranger was silent; he turned round for his hat, and was withdrawing hastily from the astonished gaze of the baronet, whose anger having once yielded to a new emotion, enabled him to consider that his present rencontre could not fail to be highly unpleasant to the unhappy lover; in an altered voice he therefore continued to say, "Do not shun me, major; though a stranger to you personally, or nearly so, you may recollect the name of Sir Thomas Frankland, as one not unworthy your acquaintance; and when I farther inform you that I have letters

to you from your father at Nice, and your uncle in Yorkshire, you will, I trust, accord me your society for a few minutes, or inform me where I may have the pleasure of delivering my credentials?"

The major (for it was indeed him) advanced, and offering his hand, endeavoured to express some apology for his warmth, allowing that his appearance had been sufficiently extraordinary to awake suspicion in a friend of Lord Egerton's; and that he trusted the circumstance——

"Don't say a word about circumstances," cried the impatient baronet; "do you think a man who has run after you all over France and England is not aware, too fully aware of your misfortunes, not to keep your secrets or assist your plans? stranger as I am now, we shall not be so long; only tell me how I can serve you? I am an Irishman, it is true, and my zeal may outstrip my wisdom; but with all my impetuosity, you will find me tractable as a child."

There had been a time when the major would have comprehended in a moment the generous ardour of the person who addressed him; but the conduct of the earl of Brooksbury had chilled his confidence in human nature, and a long and painful illness, from which he was scarcely recovered, had combined, with the more terrible malady of his mind, to render hope, and the sweet sensations arising out of it, to be strangers to his bosom; but his curiosity and gratitude were both awakened towards Sir Thomas, whose arm he now took, and whom he entreated to favour him with a detail of such circumstances respecting his own affairs as were calculated to awaken so lively and generous a sense of friendship towards one who had no claims upon his goodness.

The baronet briefly, but with all the warmth of pity and benevolence, recited the events I have mentioned, and wept abundantly over his own narration, while a slow tear coursed over the cheek of his more deeply-wounded auditor, who became so ill that he was at length obliged to confess that he was unable to stand, and yet feared to lie down upon the grass.

The baronet perceived his horse grazing near them: he assisted the major to mount, and without betraying his intention, led him by a circuitous path to the house, when, perceiving some of the servants, he called for help; and



before the ~~major~~ had time to recollect himself, he found himself stretched on a sofa in Lord Egerton's breakfast parlour, and several kind faces looking upon him with unspeakable tenderness; but the alteration in his person from sickness, and the dress he wore, was such as to render Sir Thomas's information necessary in the way of introduction, though he carefully avoided mentioning his name in the presence of the servants. The major complained of a violent pain in the back of his head, and expressed some fears of the return of a rheumatic fever, from which he had scarcely recovered: the housekeeper was summoned, and gave it as her decided opinion, that the poor man should be got into a warm bed directly; drink plentifully of hock whey, and be wrapped in flannel. She looked somewhat surprised to hear the best bed in the house ordered by her lady for his reception; but the offices of humanity were ever dispensed at Thorp Hall too liberally, to make her doubt the propriety of this; and she observed, that "to be sure, the badly man was very handsome;" and as she felt his pulse, she "saw he had a shirt on as good as my lord's, and a skin under it as white as my lady's, so she thought he may be had been somebody sometime, as poor as he was."

There was an unresisting obedience to the will of those around him, which surprised and gratified the baronet, while it evinced to the more discerning Lady Egerton—a degree of bodily suffering and imbecility which called only for her sincere pity; and though she was ever happy to relieve the sufferings of all the children of affliction, yet she could not divest herself of the fear, that if any accident should discover the major's residence under the same roof to Lady Caroline, that it would destroy the first glimmerings of reason, or perhaps hurry her to some fatal and irretrievable act of imprudence. She concluded that Major Sedgewood was aware of the residence of his beloved Caroline with her, from the circumstance of his being found in disguise near the house; but Sir Thomas had been too busy in relating his own narrative to learn the particular views which had brought him thither, and her ladyship justly thought she ought to be acquainted with them.—To her lord she communicated her anxiety by words and looks, conveyed as well as she was able, for her delicacy towards their sick guest rendered particular communica-

tion impossible: his assurances quieted her fears, and she proposed that the major should be carried to the chamber which was prepared for him. The manifest change in his countenance proved his knowledge of Lady Caroline's situation, as it changed to a still deeper paleness, and the hand which was held by Lord Egerton shook as with convulsive tremors; the good old man, considerably sending the servant before them, led the invalid himself, informing him that the person on whose account he felt some alarm was most probably retired to rest, and he had therefore nothing to fear—an information which seemed in some measure to restore him, as he regained the courage which his mental conflict appeared to have overpowered, and retired to his bed with comparative composure.

When Lord Brooksbury, by openly retracting his promise, had awakened the just indignation of Major Sedgewood, his first thought was to hasten to his uncle, as the only friend now within his reach, to whom his wounded spirit could freely communicate its vexation; happy would it have been had this resolution been put in practice; but as the desire of seeing Lady Caroline, and hearing her lips again confirm the promise now doubly necessary to his peace, kept him some days lingering in the vain hope of effecting such a purpose, without subjecting him again to the insulting dismissal, he, of course, lost his chance, by the hasty departure of his lordship for his seat in Staffordshire. As soon as, through the medium of his faithful servant, he had discovered the suddenness of this movement, and the irritation of temper in which it was undertaken, he was convinced that Lady Caroline was suffering under the severe persecution of her father on his account; and conscious that every attempt to see her, or even convey a letter to her, must be attended with an increased portion of suffering to her, he determined to abstain from the attempt, until his man should have been enabled to form such an acquaintance with some domestic as to render the discovery utterly improbable; yet finding it impossible to quit the neighbourhood where a being so tenderly beloved was enduring unmerited sorrow for his sake, he laid aside his military insignia, announced himself as Mr. Varley, and procured lodgings at a farmer's in the neighbourhood, as a person who had been recommended to try change of air, from being reduced by a fever; a story which gained full credit, from the paleness of his counte-

nance and the abstractedness of his manners; while his servant was represented as a relation, who frequently came from a neighbouring town to visit him.

So well had the earl taken his measures, that from the circumstance of the major's servant being well known to his household, it became impossible for some time to forward a letter with safety; for though love to their master had little place in the earl's household, yet fear and self-interest held a high place there; and though some would have been glad to forward the wishes of their young lady, whom they pitied, yet as they were the more simple and honest of the household, John wisely thought they might be easily circumvented by the watchful eyes who were interested in detecting a correspondence, which the earl very naturally thought would arise from his interdictions. At length he succeeded in forwarding a billet, through the medium of that servant whom I formerly mentioned as a Fairborough man, and who, in common with his townsmen, loved the name of a Sedgewood; to this person he revealed likewise the marriage of Sir Charles Sedgewood, which he had just heard of by mere chance, as his master's concealment had precluded the possibility of receiving letters without acquainting his uncle where he was; the man was grieved at a marriage, which he thought could not fail being bad for the major, and in his hurry to communicate his fears, drew suspicion on himself from his lordship's valet; he was examined in the earl's presence, and the guilty billet, which he had not had time to deliver, found in his bosom. His lordship was too good a politician to discharge him; he even laid the billet aside with apparent good humour, saying he would give it Lady Caroline when she next visited him; and then ordered the man to set out immediately with his steward on particular business to his Hampshire estate.

On the strength of this marriage information, the earl proceeded as we have seen, while Major Sedgewood's servant, from the absence of his confidant, became utterly unable to receive an answer from Lady Caroline; but from the manner in which he afterwards found the man was sent out of the way, he could scarcely allow himself to hope that it had ever been delivered. For a few days, the report of the earl's illness diverted him from the anxiety which consumed him; after that he heard vague reports of some terrible oath that was exacted from the unhappy Lady Caroline.

which assisted to distress him, as well as the various gossip accounts which had represented the earl as locking up his only daughter every night, and feeding her on bread and water; for though he did not credit either the one or the other, yet he thought but too justly there was some foundation from which they sprung; he knew enough of the earl to believe it was but too likely that he would, if possible, exact a solemn promise from his daughter, which she would, from principles of religion and honour, preserve with as much strictness towards *him*, as he had with levity broken them towards *her*: he believed too that the earl had not sufficient tenderness to spare his daughter from even corporeal suffering, if she could not otherwise be subdued to his purpose; and, therefore, while he refused implicit credence to "what she said to her neighbour," he yet nourished a thousand fears for the safety of his unhappy mistress.

Soon after this the duke appeared, and it was known that Lady Caroline had been once more admitted to walk in the garden; in a short time he heard that she rode out with the duke and her father; in this situation, with a slouched hat, and wrapt in a large roquelaire, he had once more an opportunity of beholding for a moment the idol of his heart; her face was pale, and bore the marks of sorrow and confinement; but at the moment the carriage passed him, a smile irradiated her countenance, as she was listening to the duke, who was gazing at her with a look that spoke his passion: the very heart of Theodore sunk in him at the sight, and a pang to which all other pangs are light, spread its poignant venom through his tortured bosom, and he returned to his humble home so very a wretch, it seemed as if the very air he had inhaled had mildewed his soul, and blighted its very powers of happiness. As if to aggravate his woes beyond endurance, his rustic hostess began bitterly to lament that he had been walking out at the very time when the fine folks from the castle had rode past in the grand coach that the duke had brought to carry away his bride; "For after all," added she, "that Sally Grubbs and dame Carter a sed, it seems she is to haf *he* at last; and her father, who knows the duke is as old as he, made her take her affidavit down on her pended knees, poor lamb, that she would marry *he*, and no other, though her heart be gone over the sease to a fine banson young soldier, as I be told."

The major answered only by a deep groan ; but the woman heard something in it so much beyond all common sympathy, that she felt grieved at the pain she had imparted ; and as she followed the major into his little parlour, under pretence of wiping down the dust, she added—" Nay, for matter o' that, I do hope she'll be happy at last too ; for you see poor Lady Caroline be very young, and when she gets a grand house of her own, and a power of fine diamonds and lace, an dremembers that it's a good thing to be an old man's darling, and, God help her, that's what she's never been yet, why she'll make up her mind to it. Indeed Mrs. Jackson at waits on her says, she be far better in her spirits like, for some days past."

The major's total silence indicating displeasure, now induced the honest tattler to leave the room ; and the major, throwing himself on the bed, gave way to the foul fiend which had taken possession of him, and most rancorously consigned love and its objects to every devil in Quevedo's catalogue ; but scarcely had he done that, when the pale face of his adored Caroline arose to his view, a benign exorciser ; he remembered her tempered sweetness, her steady friendship, her fervent piety, and he abhorred himself for daring to doubt her fidelity. Every proof of tender affection, consistent with the purity of her own nature, he had received from her, and the proof of what she had lately suffered for him was read in the very countenance whose guiltless and transient smile he had been so ready to condemn. True, she was young, extremely young ; but her judgment was ripened beyond her years, nor had she ever known the weak frivolities that govern half her sex ; so young, ambition could not stimulate her to forego that tender union which had so long bound her to a heart congenial with her own : but still, that smile, that damned smile, which she had accorded to the detested being whose gloating eye the purity of Caroline's soul would have shrunk from, had she been the angelic being his fancy had imaged her. A thought now seized him ; he determined to challenge the duke, and improbable as it was that the hoary gallant should honour his assignation, yet a mind thus goaded on to madness found some relief in taking refuge from the dreams of frenzy, in the contemplation of any event which " could better life, or end it."

## CHAP. VII.

'Tis now delightful agony no more,  
But bitters all unmix'd.

THOMSON.

JOHN, the major's servant, on arriving the next morning, found his master impatiently expecting him, and still experiencing that dreadful turmoil of thought which characterizes the wretch "who loves, yet doubts," and which has been portrayed by our immortal bard in a manner beyond all praise. It was a kind of evil for which this honest sympathizer had got no cordial in all his budget of consolations, and he therefore heard the sorrow he lamented with silent commiseration; but when his master proceeded to say that he was determined to challenge the duke, John started with the idea that his poor master's misfortunes had actually turned his head, and he exclaimed—"Dear heart, your honour is ill, very ill; you are fitter for bed than fighting, to my mind."

The major insisted upon proceeding in his own way.

"Well, well," said John, "you must take it; your honour knows what is best: but you know there are not many wives who will thank a man for killing their husbands, even if they are not quite to their minds; and I have a great notion, if ever Lady Caroline really marries that old sinner, it will be this very day."

The major, rising, with distraction in his look, insisted on knowing his reasons for such a supposition.

"Why, your honour, about three miles off, who should I see but Lord and Lady Egerton, and several other gay people, and they all drove down to the castle: now your honour cannot but recollect that of all people in the world, there was nobody Lady Caroline loved like Lady Egerton; and she used to wish her father was like his lordship so much, that the servants used to fancy like, that Mr. Saville, their son, had a fancy for her."

The major's eyes flashed fire; he sprung to his portmanteau, took his pistols, ran out of the house, and made directly for the castle, determined, in despite of its haughty owner, to claim his betrothed Caroline, even if she were pronouncing those vows which bound her to another.

It was happy for this unfortunate gentleman, that the very distraction of his mind, by urging him to take the nearest road, defeated his intention, as it would only have led him to expose sorrows sacred to the eye of friendship, and rage which, however naturally and justly excited, could not lead him to the revenge he sought, without subjecting him to everlasting regrets; he was near five miles from the castle, the first three of which were easily past, as they were open enclosures; but having quitted all traces of road, as he approached the mansion, he fell into some plantations, whose winding paths entirely bewildered him; and after walking and running for near two hours, he found himself, by a sudden opening, in full view of the castle, but still at a very considerable distance from it. Vexed and surprised, he now regretted his impetuosity, and stood still for the purpose of reconnoitring: while his ardent eye rested on the castle, he beheld the carriage of Lord Egerton, and a chariot that seemed of the same party, with some gentlemen on horseback, drive from the door; the chariot and horsemen went off at a brisk trot, but the movement of the coach was so slow, as to indicate its containing a sick traveller—"Ah!" he exclaimed, "it is a plain case that Lady Egerton is ill, and that nothing less than an affair of the utmost importance would have drawn her out—doubtless the marriage has been performed by a special license. Yes; all now is over!—all, *all* is lost!"

The major threw himself on the ground in utter despair; and the agitation of his mind appeared so to overcome his body, that when, on the appearance of his servant, he would have risen, from a sense of shame at having suffered a deceitful girl thus to destroy a veteran soldier, he found himself scarcely able to rise; and his haggard countenance betrayed the severity of his sufferings, to which poor John hoped he should give instant relief, by the assurance that he had seen Lady Caroline placed in the carriage between Lord and Lady Egerton; that she appeared ill; and, from the style of her dress, gave no indication of being made a bride.

A few moments ago, Major Sedgewood believed that he despised Lady Caroline; he now felt that he loved her to distraction; that his pity for her unmerited sorrow was equal even to his affection. He now sought only to throw himself at her feet, to entreat her forgiveness for his unworthy sus-

picions, and again vow to live only for her sake; he could not help rejoicing that she had left her father's house, and was under the protection of friends who well knew the situation in which he had been placed in the earl's family. But then, again, the green-eyed monster seized him; for might not their cares be extended for the sake of their son, the young and accomplished Colonel Saville, a rival infinitely more to be dreaded than the duke? Again he walked forward with hurried step, and an air of resolute defiance, followed by his servant, who, perceiving that he had quitted the path to the castle, justly conceived that he wished to proceed to Lord Egerton's, and therefore ventured to remind him that he was in a very different direction to that which led to Thorp Hall, adding, that it was ten miles distant, and the skies portended heavy rain. The major stopped to inquire the road, and being shown it, informed John he had no farther occasion for him at present, and that he wished to be alone. The faithful servant instantly withdrew; but when at a distance, he cast many a lingering look towards his master, whose perturbed and changeful step but too strongly revealed the state of inward warfare he was now experiencing.

Anxious as the major was to reach Thorp Hall, he had still fixed on no pretext for making his appearance there, which he could think sufficient to justify his abrupt intrusion; but to be once more capable of seeing his Caroline, without subjecting himself to entering the earl's grounds, was a satisfaction not to be resisted; though, if she was really ill, it was most probable she would be denied to him, especially, if the Egerton family had indeed an interest in keeping them asunder: as these thoughts passed his mind, he found himself in the precincts of the park; and now one part of his object was attained, he checked for a moment the hurrying step he had assumed, and stood to consider how he should proceed in his advances to the house.

The rain now fell in torrents, and the poor woman who lived at the outer lodge, observing a gentleman standing still so as to receive the full benefit of it, instantly conceived that nothing less than positive madness could prompt him to such conduct. The fact was, the servant who had passed about an hour before, and of whom she had inquired—"Who my lady had brought back in the coach?" had answered, that—"To the best of his belief it was a poor young



thing that had lost her senses:" the idea of insanity being thus introduced into the woman's head, she fastened it upon the first object she came near, who appeared, indeed, by no means unlikely to justify her conclusion; in consequence, however, of this unfortunate association, when the major, recollecting himself, became aware of his situation, and requested permission to enter her cottage, and dry his clothes, she instantly closed the door, locked it, and by the help of her child, made a further barricade with every article of moveable furniture, calling out of her window—"Go away, poor man; God bless you, go away, that's a good dear; go back again to your straw, that's a honey."

An address meant to convey pity and tenderness, accompanying an action devoid of both, surprised the major; he entreated her to unbar the door, saying she need not be afraid of him; he was a gentleman, a friend of her lord's; and so far from robbing her, he would pay her very handsomely for the paltry accommodation he requested. Her child, as they stood at the window, joined in the request, saying—"You see, mammy, he is wet, quite dripping wet; let him come in and warm himself; he looks as if he would hurt nobody."

"Not for the wide world," returned the mother: "why he might bite us both in a minute; and as to the rain, why it'll never hurt hē; cold and hunger, frost and snow, never hurts mad folks, they say; and that poor young thing that's gone through with my lady, as delicate as she looks, would take no harm at all, if they turned her stark naked with the deer in the park, seeing as how she have clean lost her wits, poor creeter."

The information thus conveyed lost not its full effect upon the irritated mind of the agonized lover; he no longer entreated admittance, but rushing forwards with a velocity which confirmed the poor woman in her opinion, soon found himself in the midst of a thick grove of oak, which bounded one side of the park; here he again threw himself on the ground, overcome by anguish, which appeared even more terrible than that he had experienced in the morning, and where, if the bitterness of his grief had not found the salutary relief of tears, he felt as if his burning brain would have partook the dreadful evil he deplored. Yes, the major could weep; for grief was the passion under which he now bent. Jealousy does not weep, for it is ever commingled with the more ma-

lignant elements of human suffering; but the afflicted by sorrow only have the sad privilege of tears; and the unhappy Theodore, stretched on the damp ground, wept, prayed, and groaned for his beloved Caroline, until the shades of evening closed around him, and night, in sympathetic gloom, partook the agony under which he laboured.

Poor John, who knew no peace while his master was a stranger to comfort, had unwillingly returned to the major's lodgings; but when the rain came on, he set out with his roquelaire on his arm, saying, his relation would be getting wet. Convinced that he was gone to Thorp Hall, he made immediately for that place; but on passing the lodge, had the precaution to inquire; the mistress was at that moment relating to her husband the story of the poor madman who wanted to come in and dry himself, and John was but too soon convinced that his dear master had been the object of her ridiculous fears. Though John had witnessed his master's power in many a perilous situation, to brave fatigue and laugh at luxurious wants, yet he recollected that he had now been nearly two years surrounded by English comforts, and was so unused "to bear the warring of the elements," that it was impossible he could bear the rain and cold, to which he had been subjected, without suffering most severely, especially when he was assuaged by the woman that the poor gentleman had branched off into the plantation, and could not have reached the house without being seen either by her or the child, who being somehow quite grieved for him, had watched at the window till night-fall. The man, whose humanity was roused, proposed seeking the gentleman in the woods with John, to which the latter with difficulty assented, being well aware that it was but too likely that his master's delicacy would be wounded by the appearance of a stranger; this was, however, overruled by the difficulties of his situation, and they set out together.

When the major first heard voices in the wood, he began to be sensible of his situation, and found himself, as it were, root-bound to the earth; every effort he made to move occasioned excruciating pain in his limbs, and daggers seemed entering into his temples. "Surely," said he, "these are the pains of death; the hand of the Almighty is upon me; he calls me from the misery of life to that rest which can alone end my miseries. In the very prime of my days, I am the

victim of unmerited affliction; after being spared from the field of honour, I am condemned to expire unfriended and alone, not only torn from the voice of love, which I had once so fondly hoped would cheer the bed of death, and point the way to everlasting bliss, but from the lowest tone of compassion which man bestows on man. Oh God! surely this is too much!"

"Nay, but who art thou, oh man, that repliest against God?"

These words struck full upon the mind of the disconsolate being, even as he heard the last sounds of the distant voices die upon his ear; he recollected now that if he were indeed called at this awful hour to stand at that tribunal before whose solemn audit even the wisest and best cannot answer for one in a thousand of his errors, that he was unprepared to render up the dread account. Had not his grief been immoderate, even to sin? and his very prayers mingled with reproach to the hand which afflicted him? Had he not, in the intemperance of jealous rage, that very morning sought the life of a fellow creature? and had not the evening hour witnessed an abhorrence of his own? Had not his love been carried to an excess sinful in the eyes of him who hath forbade idolatry? and how, therefore, could he appear in the sight of him who readeth not only the actions but the hearts of the children of men, and who is of "purer eyes than to behold iniquity?"

Such are the awful thoughts which every reasonable being must meditate upon at the near approach of death—the veil of self-deceit is then rent; and however justly man may to his fellow worm appeal for acquittal, as to the tenor of his life, and even the exalted morality of his actions, he knows that, before his great Creator and Judge, he is no other than a fallen being, whose best actions have been ever blended with unworthy motives, whose wisest resolutions have been defeated by inconsistent weakness, and who cannot dare to lift his conscious eyes towards the throne of judgment, but as he is led by humble faith and pious hope in the gospel of peace to seek for mercy through his Redeemer's intercession; and if such are the fears of the righteous at this awful hour, well may it be asked, "Where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?"

As the major thus cogitated, the sound of the voices again broke on his ear, and communicated a ray of hope to his

heart, which was felt in despite of the sorrow which reigned there; for religion now brooded there like the spirit on the great abyss, when life sprang from the genial warmth. He exerted himself to give a faint halloo, which was instantly answered by poor John; and the voice of this faithful domestic was now music in his master's ear: in a few moments the dim light of a lanthorn was seen, and the arms of his attendants succeeded in raising him; but the motion was attended with such torturing pain, that for a few moments it was succeeded by apparent insensibility; as it was, however, impossible to avoid inflicting this suffering, the two men were obliged to carry him between them; and, by the stranger's advice, they made the best of their way to a farmhouse at no great distance, where, it was thought, necessary comforts and proper attendance might be easily procured.

Just as they emerged from the wood, the moon, now in the earliest wane, shone out from the dark clouds which had hitherto enveloped her, with a brilliant and triumphant light, which shed its full rays on the face of the major, and discovered to the attendants that they had dropped his hat in the woods, and, of course, exposed his head to a double portion of the midnight air; as John drew a silk handkerchief from his own neck to remedy this loss, and was tying it round his master's icy brows, now throbbing with accumulated pangs, he whispered—"Have a good heart, your honour; see what a glorious night we have got at last; the moon has had hard work to climb so many black mountains of clouds; but she has conquered all, and has nothing to do now but shine on till the sun comes."

"She is in the wane," said the major with a deep sigh.

"True, your honour; but she gives a sweet light, for all that—we must take joy when God sends it; but I beg your honour's pardon; but somehow I feel as if this moonshine came over my heart on purpose to comfort it, and I couldn't help speaking."

Madame Genlis has called the belief in presentiment the "superstition of tender souls;" and as Theodore's was a tender, though a manly soul, he yielded for a moment to the soothing idea suggested by the untutored, but feeling heart of his faithful attendant; and as he watched the beauteous orb shed her benignant beams on "herb, tree, fruit, and flower," with an irradiation so soft, that it seemed to veil the very beauties it revealed, his bosom expanded to the

idea, that as he seemed providentially rescued from immediate death, he might be preserved for future enjoyment : but the severe pain he endured would scarce allow his mind the power of arresting hope ; and before the farmer's door had opened to receive its unexpected guest, every idea, save that of obtaining present relief from excessive and still increasing pain, was banished from the memory of the suffering Theodore.

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## CHAP. VIII.

*How every heart-string bleeds at thoughts of parting.* BLAIR.

WHEN John had procured that medical assistance which was now become highly necessary for his master, he learnt, with extreme sorrow, that the major was now in a rheumatic fever, the worst part of which lay in his head ; though his whole body was likewise so much affected by it, that it threatened to deprive him of the use of his limbs, and render him an invalid for life. This melancholy sentence the humane servant concealed, as far as it was possible, from his master ; and perceiving that it was a complaint which required uncommon exertion on the part of the sufferer, he neglected no means of presenting to his master's consideration every stimulant for exertion he could devise ; and as his vicinity to Thorp Hall enabled him to make many inquiries after Lady Caroline, he always endeavoured to give the major that kind of information respecting her, which was most calculated to engage him in an endeavour to procure himself the power of seeing her. The major still went by the name of Varley ; and the family at the Hall, who never failed to hear of the wants of all who were afflicted in their neighbourhood, did not fail to offer the sick stranger any comforts which their house afforded ; but when they found he was attended by an attached friend, and in possession of all that he really wanted, they did not incommode him with useless inquiries ; so that he remained unknown and unsuspected, through many weeks of racking pain and tedious languishment ; during which he learnt,

with tolerable precision, the real state of his beloved partner in affliction, over which he mourned unceasingly, yet not without a latent hope, that it would be possible for the voice of love to restore what grief had taken away, until he learnt the fears of Lady Egerton, lest any affecting circumstance, especially, seeing or hearing suddenly from Major Sedgewood, should again destroy the fine fabric which the trembling hand of friendship was now so cautiously repairing.

Before his sickness, there is no doubt but the major, if it had been in his power, would have rushed forward, at all hazards, to have caught the desponding girl to his bosom, and poured his vows of undying love into her ears; but he had now learnt, from bitter experience, how finely the issues of life and reason are connected with the fibres of the frame, and how soon the extremes of sensibility may degenerate into the visions of delirium. As soon, therefore, as his convalescence permitted him once more to use exercise, he allowed himself to walk no further than the bounds of a short meadow, from which, at a considerable distance, he could discern Lady Egerton's carriage, which, he had reason to believe, contained his soul's treasure; and the hope that she was then enjoying the same reviving breeze whose salubrity restored vigour to his own frame, was so delightful a thought, that it never failed to compose his mind, and restore it to a degree of tranquillity highly conducive to his recovery; and he now felt how true it is, that all misery is comparative; he was still the same wretched, bereaved, doubting creature he had been; but the scourge of sickness was removed; one dreadful burthen was cast off; and resignation sprung from that patience he had now learnt to practise; and gratitude to Heaven for that which was removed, gave him fortitude to bear that which remained.

John informed him one day, that it was, he believed, the custom of Lady Caroline, on moonlight nights, to sit frequently till near midnight in her window, watching the orb with a kind of melancholy pleasure, in which Lady Egerton ever insisted on her being indulged. He added, that he had ascertained the window in which she generally sat, and could easily show it his master when he was able to walk so far. His master became able, in a short time, not only to walk but to run; he even ventured to leap the far-

mer's stile ; and in a very few days, John allowed that his honour was equal to the expedition.

Ever bearing in mind the real welfare of his beloved mistress, the major equipped himself in the farmer's clothes, and, accompanied by John, set out as soon as the fair queen of night gave promise of success. As soon as the servant had pointed to the window, he withdrew from the arm of his master, leaving him a strong staff in his hand, and entreating him to suffer no fatigue to induce him to rest again upon the treacherous damp ground.

The major replied not ; his palpitating heart scarce permitted him to breathe, and his strained eyes, bent towards the window, darted a beam that seemed as if it could almost consume the base impediments that kept her from his ardent gaze ; ages of fear and hope seemed concentrated in those moments of trembling expectation ; but when at length she appeared, when he was convinced it was indeed her form he saw, and even her features met his view, he was obliged to lean against the friendly tree under whose shade he stood concealed, and where he sobbed in very agony.

The unconscious maid, throwing open a wide casement, stepped out upon a little balcony, made to contain a few flowering shrubs ; she was drest in a white silk night gown, and her flowing ringlets simply confined by a wreath of eglantine, which had wound its tendrils round her window ; the major perceived that she was become much thinner, and the smile of dimpled beauty, which had once played round her mouth in all the fascination of youthful loveliness was now fled ; but the mournful cast of her exquisite features, the very self-desertion they evinced, rendered her the object of a feeling dearer than even love itself ; and it was with the utmost difficulty the major could refrain from rushing forwards ; and calling her once more—" His own, his adored Caroline."

Happily for him, John returned in time to convey him home in safety ; and finding no bad effects had arisen from this excursion, the weather being now perfectly warm and pleasant, this indulgence was permitted again ; and the major was making his fifth pilgrimage to his unconscious shrine, when Sir Thomas crossed his path, and produced that temporary return of his fever which we have already noticed.

As soon as Major Sedgewood's seryant learnt the situation

of his master, he applied to Lord Egerton for permission to attend him; and as he was become not only an active but a skilful nurse, he had the praise of warding off the attack which now threatened him; and in two days the major was ready to leave his chamber.

Colonel Saville not being now at home, Lord Egerton exerted himself to amuse their lively guest, Sir Thomas; and as the day was gloomy, and Lady Egerton declined her accustomed airing with Lady Caroline, he proposed to the baronet to exchange his usual ride for a drive round the grounds, to which he assented. While this arrangement took place, Major Sedgewood hearing the chariot was at the door, withdrew from the window, even while he was most fondly desiring to catch a single look of the beautiful invalid; and listened with an anxious ear to the receding sound of its wheels; as he was aware that the gentlemen would be about taking their accustomed ride very soon, he thought it best to step down and pay his respects to Lord Egerton before he set out, and at the same time to announce his departure. He had seen Sir Thomas early that morning, as the friendly baronet generally visited him the moment he had put his clothes on, and had partly agreed to accompany him to Bath, as he was well aware the warm baths of that celebrated spring were most likely to prove of essential benefit to him; but he felt the constraint he was now in of breathing the same air, yet not beholding the dear form of his Caroline, become every hour more irksome; and he wished to return to his lodging and arrange his affairs there immediately, that he might be ready to accompany his new but warm-hearted friend.

Under this idea he descended to the breakfast parlour, which he found empty; but as a newspaper was laying on the table, he took it up, and holding it up to his eyes, which had been a little injured by his indisposition, he did not perceive the entrance of any person, till an exclamation from the lips of Lady Egerton made him start; he dropt the paper, and beheld her ladyship, with Caroline hanging upon her arm, standing before him.

To fly the sight of her he adored was impossible; but a sign from Lady Egerton (whose benevolent countenance showed how sensibly her fears were awakened) recalled him some portion of self-command; and repressing, as far as was possible, the emotion he felt, he addressed the com-



mon compliments of the day to both the ladies; the sound of his voice, though faltering and inarticulate, awakened more fully the recollection of the fair sufferer—her countenance became suddenly illumed with intelligence, she approached hastily towards him, then checked herself, then again gazing with a look of apprehensive doubt and extreme compassion, she at length said—“Poor, poor Theodore;” and falling into the arms of her maternal friend, she wept for the *first* time—she wept upon her bosom.

This was the eventful moment to which that kind friend had so long looked, and she embraced it with joy; she did not even repel Theodore, when he, now advancing, took the hand of Caroline and dropping on his knees, as he pressed it to his lips, besought her once more to look upon him; she raised her eyes wistfully to Lady Egerton’s, saying, “Will that break my vow?”

A pang like the bolt of heaven shot through the major’s heart as these words fell from her guileless lips, and scarcely could he refrain cursing the cruel policy of a father, which could thus fetter the innocent mind of such a child as this; he was, however, somewhat relieved from this distracting sensation by the reply of—“No, my sweet child, you will break no vow by conversing with him a *short* time; you know you have made a vow to marry him *some* time, and he deserves your love.”

She turned timidly round—“You are very, very pale,” said she, still fearfully, while a transient blush passed her cheek as she laid her hand upon his forehead. That blush trilled through the very soul of Theodore; again his Caroline, the modest maid, whose animated beauty once glowed with speaking thought, was once more brought to his despairing eye; he made a faint effort to catch her in his arms, but, overpowered by his feelings, sunk back on the sofa he had just quitted, nearly insensible. Lady Egerton, now changing the object of her solicitude, seized his hand, and offering him salts, besought him to exert himself, while the gentle Caroline, whose mind by degrees recovered its energies, hung fondly over him, and while her warm tears fell upon his wan cheek, besought him to live, chafed his temples with her hands, and told him the time would yet come when he might claim his faithful Caroline. Every word she uttered indicated reviving intellect; but, alas! with mind and memory returned the sense of that sorrow which had

ruined both ; and by the time that the major had overcome the feelings which oppressed him, she was sunk in that unutterable anguish to which even the horror of madness, or the stupor of idiocy, seems almost preferable.

When, however, Lady Caroline was able to speak, she besought the major to remember that her vows were his ; and though it was too probable that she should never be more to him than she was at that moment, yet she trusted it would sooth some sad reflections, to remember that her faith was unalienable. She besought him to try if the mild air of Italy would restore his health ; and said, that although she found it was impossible to live through another interview like this, yet the belief that he was living, and in health, would be to her the only solace of existence, as she should endeavour to cherish a hope that they might once more meet, since that hope was inexpressibly dear to her. She paused—a faint endeavour to give the major that liberty she had decried herself, was half expressed, in a voice of perturbation that spoke how much it cost her ; but she was interrupted by his suddenly throwing himself on his knees before her, and swearing that, living or dying, no human being but herself should bear his name, or share a heart devoted to a being so purely, though so unhappily beloved.

To describe the last adieu of such a pair as this is utterly beyond my feeble powers ; by the advice of their mutual friends it was hastened, and the good-natured baronet tore the major away from a scene which he was utterly unable to bear in his present state, and conducted him to Bath ; but as this did not prove a perfect restorative, and the general health of this unhappy man being so affected as to require change of climate, after a few weeks they set out to Italy, having written to their friends at Nice, and informed Mr. Sedgewood that in a few months they would join him there. In the meantime Lady Caroline remained with her attentive friends, who, anxious to preserve her in her present convalescence, and sensible that residing with the earl, her father, was not likely to promote the restoration of her spirits, they set out on a tour round the kingdom, agreeable to their original plan, by which means he was still kept in ignorance as to the real state of her intellects. It was found that no means of preserving reason, or improving cheerfulness, were found so efficacious to the mind of this humane

young creature, as that of allowing her the power of making others happy; wherever she went, the children of misery were her first care; she visited the abodes of sorrow, entered into the detail of affliction, whether mental or bodily, and appeared to feed life in herself only by her power of imparting it to others; the widow and the fatherless, the aged and the helpless, every where partook her bounty; but when the simple story of two tender hearts, divided by sorrow, or contemned by prudence, met her ear, her sympathy assumed an aspect of more tenderness, and her bounty rose to generosity; and when she contemplated the happiness she had caused, a momentary joy lighted her meek eyes, and she felt as if she too tasted the pleasures of love; but, alas! this joy was ever succeeded by the bitter reflection her unhappy and peculiar situation was so well calculated to produce in a heart so tender and so constant as the unhappy Lady Caroline's; it was always observed, too, that the mention of her father, at such times, gave her great pain, and a kind of cold shudder crept through her frame, as if she was struggling with a sensation she condemned, but could not conquer.

Near three years had passed since the major's departure, in which a few regular visits and formal epistles had passed between a father and daughter, who, being the only natural supports each possessed in the whole world, ought to have been very differently situated; when, as Lady Egerton and her dear *protegee* were one day slowly perambulating a country village not far from Thorp Hall, they remarked a young woman leading an old one, who was quite blind, to the door of a neighbour; there was something in the attention this young woman evinced beyond the cares of vulgar humanity, for though at an age when curiosity is alert, and in a rank of life which renders a splendid equipage a novel object, she did not allow herself to be withdrawn a moment from her decrepid charge, till she had safely placed her in a wicker chair in the cottage, when she just stepped to the door to take a peep at the ladies, accompanied by the inhabitant, a decent-looking woman.

"Is that poor woman totally blind, my good girl?" said Lady Egerton, as she alighted from the carriage, with an intention, if possible, to relieve the sufferer.

"Yes, madam, quite blind, and deaf too," said the young

woman, curtsying; and adding, in a lower voice, "she is my grandmother, madam."

"I thought as much," said the lady, "from your attention to her. I love to see young people grateful; and the manner in which you assisted your grandmother, as you guarded her from the stones, convinced me that you were a grateful girl, who had not forgot what you owed to her."

The poor girl was overwhelmed with confusion; but her blushes were succeeded by tears, and she stammered—"Oh yes, madam, I hope I've forgot—I mean, I try to forget all, and I hope it'll please God to teach me to forget every thing."

"I don't understand you," said Lady Egerton; "but yet I cannot help thinking well of you." She hesitated.

"Please your ladyship," said the neighbour, "poor Sally, here, who I will say is as good a girl as ever was born, doesn't well know how to speak before such fine ladies as you be, and specially when you talked of her not forgetting her old grandmother; for to be sure the old woman did do her a sad spiteful trick, that's for certain, an she thot as how your ladyship luded to that, becuse why ye see its always uppermost in her own heart, as it were."

"Don't say that," said Sally, weeping, "for I prays against thinking of it every night of my life."

Lady Caroline's attention was aroused, for she saw that Sally's blushes arose from that fatal passion in whose sorrows she could so fully sympathize; she therefore begged the neighbour to inform them a little further on the subject, as they were totally ignorant of what she meant by the spiteful trick.

"Why, miss," said the woman, "I'll tell you how it was; this girl's father was as good a man as ever was born, and he always supported his mother with the rest of his family, and his wife was very good to her; and so they brought up their two children, William and Sally, to behave prettily to her, as it were; but she was a delicate body, and pined away in a waste about six years, and somehow poor he was never quite right after; and he happened a bad axcident one day when he was felling a tree; he cut his leg with a hatchet, and it made him bleed so much that he fell into a weak way, and died about two years after; and a grievous thing it was for all his neighbours," said the

relater, as she wiped her eyes with the corner of her apron.

“ Well, madam, but as I was a saying, William was got up a fine young man, and so he kept up his father’s trade of a carpenter, and Sally took in a bit of sewing when she could get it, and spinned at other times; and her grandmother was not quite blind then, but very near it; howsomdever, Sally always waited of she duly, and kept the house clean besides, and it was quite comfortable to look at like, to see these young things walk in the ways of their parents, as it were, but, dear heart, there was a young man worked in the same shop with William they called Tom Handy; he was a very good lad, and could read and write; and being very willing to do every one a good turn, he used to go home with Willy at nights, to teach him to write a bit, and so by degrees he taught Sally too, and a sort of a liking took place; and Willy was glad of it, for he loved them both so, that he would have done any thing to make em happy as it were; besides, Tom Handy got very good wages, because he worked at fine work; so you see it was a very pretty match for Sally as one could have had; but, dear heart, this poor old woman didn’t like Sally should marry at all, for fear she should’nt wait on her; so what does she do but pack off Sally to see her uncle, that lives five miles off, and then takes her stick in her hand, and sets off to the next market town, where she’d hard there was a press-gang; so what does she do but goes away to the captain, and told him that Thomas Handy was a wicked raffle-top-pin, that wanted to ruin her child, and she hoped he’d rid the country of him; and then she told him where to send his men to take Tom up, for it was a hard job to catch him idling about, and specially since he was out of his time, and was getting a little money together to begin the world with; but howsomdever, home comes old Betty, and when the young men came in, as usual, after dark, she said, ‘ Tom, my lad, I don’t feel well, and I wish you would go and fetch Sally; I told her to stay two nights, but I feel quite sick and tired, so set off and fetch Sally home;’ so Tom was willing enough; but, dear heart, William, being a prudent young man, followed him out, for he thought it had’nt a proper look for his sister to be out with her sweetheart late at night, and Thomas was quite of his way-of thinking; so they went together, and, dear heart, in the middle of a

lane all the pressgang rushed, upon them, and seized em, and because they made resistance, for they were both handsome, stout young fellows, they used them quite shocking, and put irons on their hands, and never let them have a moment's ease till they put them on shipboard: and now there they be, both gone over the wide seas, and this poor orphan child has not got a friend in the wide world."

While this sad story was telling, Sally had withdrawn; the tears of Lady Caroline fell fast at the recital of such unmerited sorrow, and Lady Egerton was much affected; not noticing the agitation of Lady Caroline, she inquired of the narrator—"how Sally bore the first shock of such a distressing event?"

"Oh, main bad, madam, you may be sure; for what was worst of all, some neighbours met the poor lads next morning on the road, in their handcuffs on, and their faces bloody and swelled with the blows they had received; so they stopped to tell the pressgang that there must be some mistake, for these were two honest, industrious lads as any in the country; on that the wicked heathens swore a great oath, and told who it was that had betrayed one of the lads to them, and they said it was proper to take his companion too, since birds of a feather flock together. So you see, madam, these neighbours went to Sally's uncle's and told her all they had heard, and the poor thing swounded clean away as it were; so they were forced to get a doctor to her, and she was main bad a long while, and pined and pined till she was like an attomy; but grief niver kills poor folks outright, madam, and so in time she came about again, poor young thing—she's had a great share of sorrow for her years."

"How long was it before she returned to her grandmother?"

"Why, madam, her uncle was so angered at old Betty, he said she should never come back at all, but when she got strength she should go to service; but when the poor thing got a bit better of her sickness, she found that the old woman was put in the workhouse, and that her sight was quite gone, so she thought it her duty to come back to her, and she took in spinning, and works at any thing, and the parish encourages her, and so, one way or other, she makes shift to maintain 'em both; and having no time to fret and cry much, she's beginning to look a little like herself again. You see, my lady, God is good to poor folks in that way:

we that have bread to get with our own hands, cannot sit still and grieve same as ladies can."

The simple good sense of this daughter of obscurity could not be heard by Lady Caroline without making a deep impression on her heart; but she was too much affected to make any comments. Lady Egerton, whose admiration of Sally was wound to the highest pitch, entered the cottage, and began to express her approbation warmly; but Sally modestly said, it was her duty, and she must have been a wicked girl had she neglected it, seeing her parent had always taught it her—"To be sure," added she, "I would rather have waited on grandmother for love all my life, as I used to do, and hope to do again when I can forget those that are now suffering; indeed, when I look at her now, and consider what a poor helpless creature she is, I often forget all my sorrows, and kiss her with the same love I used to do; and I pray God to forgive her, and to bring good out of evil to us all, as the parson says he very often does, even in this world."

It will be very readily supposed that this cottage was not left without something to cheer its inhabitants; but the worthy visitants were not content with a temporary gratuity; they inquired every particular respecting the present situation of the impressed young men which Sally was able to give them, and the adventure furnished conversation to Lady Egerton for the rest of the day; but on the mind of Lady Caroline it rested with a deeper influence, and she retired early, as if to give it more serious contemplation; and the next morning at breakfast, she addressed Lord and Lady Egerton, who were both inexpressibly dear to her, in the following manner:—

"When I consider, my beloved friends, my more than parents, the nature of your goodness to me, and all your unbounded sympathy has made you feel for me, I am ready to conclude it is not less my duty than I feel it to be my inclination, to devote the whole powers of my mind to soothing the remainder of your days, and being unto you as a daughter. But the lesson of self-denying virtue and pure christian forgiveness which I was taught yesterday by that injured child of poverty, assures me that my father ought to be the object of my care, and that my past sufferings ought not to steel the heart of a child against the claims of duty, or the pleadings of nature; in the sorrow that has

blighted my days, his hopes are also withered; and in contemplating his sorrows, I shall cease to resent my own; in administering to his affliction, I shall enjoy the only blessing I have yet power to embrace: my mind is, I trust, so far restored, that the exercise of its energies will increase them; and if I am made the happy instrument of consoling my declining parent's infirmities, or administering to his mental wants, surely I shall find a comfort to which I have been long a stranger. Do not, therefore, be surprised if your poor Caroline, to whom you have been Heaven's instruments of unbounded good, at length says, in the language of the prodigal, and not without some portion of his feelings too, 'I will arise and go to my father.' "

Tears of tenderness and admiration suspended words; the venerable pair loved her as the daughter of their souls, but they felt that her resolution was worthy of herself, and they would not oppose it; the carriage was prepared, for they knew that his lordship was now in the neighbourhood, but for so short a period, that it was advisable to lose no time in joining him there, as he had seldom remained at this seat for more than a week together, since the fatal event which had destroyed his projected greatness; from the fatal hour in which she had left her father's mansion, it had never met the eyes of Lady Caroline, and she could not again behold it without evincing symptoms of agitation, which alarmed the kind hearts of her friends; she exerted herself, for their sakes, to overcome these emotions, and when she alighted, proved herself equal to the trial she attempted. The earl received the party with that courtly politeness habitual to him, but without any of that emotion likely to affect a father who was once more receiving his only child to the paternal mansion; but this conduct was the less to be regretted, as it spared the feelings of her too susceptible heart, and was advantageous to his own health, which was evidently more delicate than it used to be.

After taking a family dinner, Lord and Lady Egerton returned home, promising themselves a frequent interchange of visits with their adopted child, as the only consolation for the loss of her society they could now receive. Lady Caroline commanded her tears as she bid them adieu; and though grief lay heavy on her heart, she supported a conversation for the rest of the evening with the earl, which proved how decidedly she had devoted herself to his wel-



fare. In a short time the earl experienced many comforts to which he had been long a stranger, restored to him by his kind and attentive companion; she made herself acquainted with every medical help which was necessary to him in the hour of sickness, and every amusement he was enabled to take in returning health; she bore with meekness the petulance he too frequently evinced in one state, and gave brilliancy to those moments which were cheered by the other. On the lips of both parties, Silence set her seal alike as to the past and future; but in the present hour, each found that consolation which virtuous exertion, however applied, still fails not to bestow; for the endeavours of Lady Caroline, like the dews of mercy, "were twice blest"—"they blessed her who gave, and him who took them."

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## CHAP. IX.

Self-love but serves the virtuous soul to wake,  
As the small pebble stirs the peaceful lake,  
Friend, parent, neighbour, first it will embrace.

POPE.

STR. THOMAS FRANKEAND attended Major Sedgewood to Naples, from thence to Venice; they then visited Switzerland, and the melancholy of even the heart-stricken lover was for some time amused by the bold scenery and novel landscape to be found in that enchanting country; but the simplicity of its inhabitants, while it charmed his bosom, reopened all its wounds. Here he saw love dethrone ambition, and trample on the fetters of avarice; here the tender relationship of parent and child bound their soft cords through every rank of society, and purified the heart, while they civilized the manners; disdaining the weakness of voluptuous bondage, which enervated the race they had so lately quitted, these hardy mountaineers, free as the cha-mois that bounded o'er their glaciers, and firm as the rocks that sheltered them, yet proved all the tenderness which marks the manly and the gentle characteristics of wedded love; and in their happiness the major beheld all the extent of his unutterable loss; he therefore hastened to Nice,

where his presence conferred the pleasure he was unable to share ; his father and sister lost no means of adding to his comfort ; but after having assured himself of their welfare, he was again desirous of moving ; and as Sir Thomas importuned him to return to Italy, a pair of Neapolitan eyes having made strange havock in the baronet's heart, they once more set out together, but varying their travelling system, by embarking at Marseilles ; they soon reached the spot so eagerly desired ; and the lively Hibernian was convinced that the eyes of Signora Eulalia were not injured since their departure ; it happened, however, somewhat unluckily, that their brightest rays were ever darted towards his sombre companion : the fair Italian was ambitious ; she scorned the easy conquest of the honest Irishman, and set all the spirit of an intriguing mind, and the charms of her fascinating person, to conquer the melancholy of the handsome Englishman, or at least to turn the sadness which interested her, into the vehicle of that tender sentiment she sought to inspire.

Signora Eulalia had not only the charms of beauty, accompanied by superior accomplishments in music and singing, but she possessed an exuberant fancy, considerable information, and a mind far above the common class of her country women ; to these she joined considerable address, a specious appearance of morality, when it suited her purpose, and an air of modest simplicity, resembling that which an Englishman, at this period, seldom found in such perfection as in his own country, and which she could so blend with the bewitching voluptuousness of her own, that the being she aimed to ensnare fancied that the form of Virtue herself was won to indulge him, a species of flattery the coldest can feel, and the wisest will be at little pains to analyze.

As the major, in a very early period of their acquaintance, had thought proper to hint that friendship was all his heart could now admit for woman, the lady was Platonic to admiration ; but as he had soon after owned that the tender sorrows which oppressed him were ever alleviated by music, she had no opportunity of calling her lute to aid the powers of her reason, and sung to its melting strains with eyes of such soft languishment, that it was no wonder the gay baronet, who was admitted, as far as form went, to the same honorary distinction,

Soon wander'd, a willing example, to prove,  
That friendship in woman is sister to love.

*+ no birth staining*

Though the major did not believe he could take pleasure in any thing, yet he certainly found himself subject, at the usual hour, to accompany the baronet to the fair friend's, with a quicker step and gayer air than he wore on any other occasion ; but he thought it proceeded from his regard to the baronet, who certainly merited his greatest attention, from the disinterested attachment he had evinced, and the wearisome wanderings he had so patiently partaken ; and as he really believed that he wished his friend all possible success, yet he was not as sorry as he ought to have been, when the lady positively refused to be made Lady Frankland, which was going further in the affair than the baronet meant ; nor could he understand from the tell-tale glances of those "orbs of dewy light," which revealed the state of the gentle Eulalia's bosom, that he was the man who ~~made~~ his pallid looks and absent air, had touched the susceptible maid, without feeling some little glow of pleasure play on his benighted heart ; but it was only like the moonbeam which sparkles on the icicle it cannot melt ; it shone, but could not warm the faithful shrine where the image of the far distant Caroline sat on her holy throne ; and the penetrating Eulalia soon discovered, that while his vanity enjoyed her homage, or his pity lamented it, yet his unshaken heart denied the slightest promise of return ; and in vain the lure of beauty, the charm of talents, or the stimulus of coquetry, bent their united arms against the impregnable battery of a passion not more hopeless than faithful ; yet still she played on ; for there was amusement in the action, though victory were denied to her prowess.

After another winter, the major had regained his strength, and appeared to perfect his personal merits, since he now adopted the rich hue which an Italian sun throws over the features, and he was not sorry to return to his military duties. The British troops were then carrying a brilliant career of arms in the East, where he proposed immediately to join them ; and such was the faithful attachment Sir Thomas felt for him, that he would probably have gone with him as a volunteer, when an English family, passing through Naples on their way to Sicily, engaged his attention, and eventually took him in their suite ; for he found

one of the two daughters of his new friend nearly as charming as the syren who discarded him ; and, as the major told him, "She had that within which passeth show," he determined, like a wise man, to extinguish one flame by feeding another ; and he had now the good fortune, before he reached the land of saints, to take home a very amiable wife ; so that it could not be said he had run a wild-goose chase for nothing at all.

Disappointments in tender attachments of the heart have improved some soldiers and made others, a circumstance we may trace in the private history and military achievements of several great names in our own day ; and which may be accounted for, partly by the carelessness of life the loss of a beloved object is but too apt to inspire, and partly from considering that some very active principle is required to deliver the mind from the morbid sensibility it has lately indulged, and that glory, and its accompanying irritabilities, are the most powerful of the energetic feelings. Be this as it may, it is certain that the major everywhere signalized himself, not only for undaunted bravery, but superior discipline, and, above all, for that tender humanity by which he sought to bind the wounds of suffering humanity, even where she is most decidedly outraged ; his merit occasioned him advancement in the first campaign, and at the end of the second he was brigadier general.

The laurels thus earned on the banks of the Ganges shed refreshing odours on the distant retirement of her who now soothed the sickbed of declining age, and bade her gentle heart partake heroic ardour ; but a private suffering of a part of his excellent family, every branch of which, though personally unknown, were yet tenderly bound by those fine fibres in which the lover lives a twofold life, awoke her sorrow. I mentioned that the young marquis of Blandington had conceived a passion for the major's pretty sister when she was little more than a child, and which succeeded in banishing from his heart its first impression ; this flame had literally grown with the growth, and strengthened with the strength of the young people ; and as so splendid an alliance with so amiable a young man could not fail being highly acceptable to Mr. Sedgewood, he had no farther courted his parental authority, than to postpone the marriage until his daughter had attained her eighteenth year, at which period, finding himself gradually declining, he

wished to return to his native country, and present his new connexions to his brother, as there still existed the same undivided affection between them, notwithstanding their long parting, that has ever distinguished the relationships of the Sedgewood family.

Switzerland, ever the land where the young and romantic paint the purest triumphs of hallowed love, was fixed on by the bridegroom-elect as the place in which he wished to receive the promised boon; and as Mr. Sedgewood had never been there, notwithstanding his long vicinity, he readily consented. The day before that fixed on for the marriage, it was proposed to make a small party on the lake of Geneva, in whose beautiful environs they had fixed their temporary abode; two young Englishmen and several ladies were of the party; but the latter declaring that the water appeared so rough they durst not venture, the marquis observed, he thought so indeed; the Englishmen rallied the young nobleman on his cowardice, and observed, that he had taken such a fright at his dip in the Thames, they supposed he had had the hydrophobia ever since: the marquis had not the courage to avow his fears; he protested he was ready to go on board with the first, and sprang forwards for that purpose; his gay bride, proud of his spirit, applauded the motion; yet Mr. Sedgewood observed that as he passed her, and gallantly saying "adieu!" raised her hand to his lips, that his countenance was indicative of alarm, and he hurried on to conceal his agitation. For an hour or two the lake appeared to become smoother, and the females regretted the weakness which had lost them their diversion, and suffered the vivacious raillery of the disappointed Barbara on that account, who wished a thousand times that she had gone with them; but during the afternoon, a heavy storm of thunder and rain too fully justified the prognostics of the morning, and the sun set without affording one glimpse of their return; all night long the distracted girls and my venerable uncle traversed the banks of the lake, employing guides, pilots, and boatmen, to ascertain the situation of the vessel; but the morning rose without betraying the awful secret; and it was not till a journey on the distant bank informed them that the ill-fated vessel had sunk, and except one waterman and his boy, on board had perished.

To tell the agony of this "parting stroke" is utterly beyond my powers; for many a wearisome month did the fond parent bend over his stricken child, as if the order of nature were reversed, and he was called in duteous submission to await her languid smile: he bore her to the classic scenes of Italy, and pointed out whatever could interest in antiquity or charm in art; and happily found his own strength renewed in proportion as his tender and efficacious energy was exerted. The poor girl became sensible of her father's love, and for his sake struggled to overcome the depression of her withered heart; she entreated him at length to return to their own country, since it was evident that he could now bear the climate, and England was become as much a novelty to her, as any his affection could now point out for her amusement. The good man gladly consented, and returned to gladden the last days of his beloved brother, who now, with him, rejoiced over the success of their darling Theodore, or wept at his unmerited misfortunes, the peculiar circumstances of which, from motives of delicacy to Sir Charles, had never been revealed till now, nor would they, if that intimate intercourse which leads us, in conversation, to reveal thoughts we should not allow ourselves to write, at length brought forwards the circumstance on which the earl had thought proper to affix the barrier between the unfortunate lovers. The old gentleman was now fast advancing to that period when he must resign all earthly distinctions; but it has been said, with great truth, that we are most tenacious of life when we are about to quit it; and it might be added, so we are of every thing we consider as the goods of life also; so that if ever money or honour have been esteemed by us, they are held with a tenfold grasp by the trembling hand which feels they must be soon removed for ever. I have made these observations as a prelude to Sir Charles's conduct.

The good old man was sitting with his two gouty feet laid up on pillows before him, or he would most probably have risen to take the hand of his brother, who was leaning on a table near him, and whose handkerchief was at his eyes; for though the aged do not shed many tears, yet the remembrance of his son's sufferings, blended as they must be with the blighted hopes of his youngest darling, had bade them course freely down his cheeks; at this moment the baronet, leaning towards him, said, with an ex-

pression of sorrow contending with a warmer emotion—  
 “And is it possible, Thé, that for so many years you should have suffered our gallant boy to languish thus, while the means of help were in your power?”

Mr. Sedgewood instantly withdrew his handkerchief from his eyes, and looked wistfully in his brother's face.

“Ay, you may look, and *look* again,” said the old man, reddening as he spoke, “before you find any thing in the countenance of Charles Sedgewood that tells you he has deserved this want of confidence in any of you. You *may* call it delicacy towards me. What do you suppose I could have suspected you of, if you had told me all these facts as they were developed to you? why, of wishing that an old bachelor would resign his title and estates to a fine young fellow who was likely to make the family tree flourish—a boy that he had dandled on his knees, to whom he had given his fondest affections, and whose race would have been dear to him as the blood that warms his heart's veins. Oh, what folly! what madness is there in having any secrets in families like ours! There is a pleasure, nay, a virtue, in unbounded confidence, which ought never to be sacrificed to these impertinent scrupulosities. I suppose if I had died while you were in France, you would have resigned every thing to Theodore directly?”

“Undoubtedly; I was his *father*.”

“Umph! so was I!”

“You, perhaps, think,” continued the baronet, “that I was never so generous to our dear Thé in his first outset in life, as to give you a right to believe that an old man would give up what he had seemed to retain as a young one; and I can now see, that I *too* have been to blame in not explaining to you my motives. Theodore was a fine young man; I thought he should have the honour of pushing his own fortunes, and maturing his own virtues; and as I had begun a plan of redeeming the estate from the many dilapidations it had suffered during the civil wars of Charles, I would not break in upon my plans till I saw further occasion for it; you were at that time the father of a numerous family, and they *all* lay very near my heart, and their mother—”  
 (here the baronet's eyes watered; and while his brother rose to slowly pace the room, an invariable custom with her when her beloved name was brought to his ear, he, too, stopped, unable to conceal his agitation.)

“Well, well,” resumed the old man, “when our boys were all gone, I became only the more anxious for Thé; but he became unfortunately possessed of a jointure, you know, the last time he was down; nor have I once seen him since his introduction to this upstart lord, whose ancestor was first distinguished by being known to some of the dirty favourites of James I., and who has presumed to reject a Sedgewood. But as we must all submit to love, why no wonder Theodore did it too; and had he but *told me*, all might have been well, and this new lord satisfied; he would then have found whether I could part with money, or not, and he would have seen the fields where it has been hoarding for my boy. You have been living on frogs in France, and wanted nothing; but you do not suppose if Barbara had brought over her noble lover, that I had not made up a dowry worthy *his* acceptance. Brother, I did not say as much to you, either of my motives or intentions, as I ought to have done, and you have not confided to me *your* wishes or your wants, as you should have done; but I believe I have been most to blame, for in proportion as I felt my heart warm with projects for your good, I have been accustomed to seal my lips.”

“You have ever been good and kind to every creature round you; and if I had known a positive want, I should never have hesitated to reveal it; but the only one I ever had, went to stripping you of your dignity as well as property, and well as I love my boy, I love my brother too; you know you became a married man too, and——”

“Why, ay,” said the baronet, drily, “and I got a good wife too; but you had no fear of any heirs, hey?”

“Very true; but ladies love titles, and——”

“And she will gladly resign hers. \* But we will ask her,” said the old gentleman, “for her resignation will not weary us with its declamatory fulness.”

When Lady Sedgewood answered in person to the baronet's inquiries, she heard the story of Theodore's renunciation with uplifted hands and tearful eyes, and now and then an ejaculation seemed to escape her lips, though its sound was not heard; in conclusion the baronet said—“Now, my dear Mercy, it is my wish and my intention, if agreeable to you, to resign my title and estate, and retire to live in the jointure-house with my brother, as it is, you know, big enough in all conscience; and send for my nephew, and



let him bring this Lady Caroline down to us here, that we may see his handsome face, and his lovely bride, and their dear brats about us before we die ; but what say you, Mercy, hey ?”

“ I say, Sir Charles, it is a very good thought ; and may God bless them and theirs, and send us all to see it put in execution !”

“ Bravo, my good woman ; you haven’t made so long a speech since you told old Hopkins how to cure his whitlow : so you wont fret at hearing me plain Charles Sedgewood, hey ?”

“ Why I shall be a little sorry, I confess ; but not if the major can’t be happy without it.”

“ But you wont fret after the house, the servants, the state, the coach-and-six going a snail’s gallop, and the diamond necklace and shoe-buckles, with the ear-rings that pinched you so delightfully on our last wedding-day, hey, Mercy ?”

“ It is not very likely that a woman you chose should want any thing you thought it right to resign in such a case as this—my mother was a Sedgewood, Sir Charles.”

“ True, Mercy, and your mother’s daughter is as good a woman as the whole breed ever produced.”

The lady smiled gratefully, through eyes that twinkled X with tears, and withdrew, when the baronet, turning to his brother, said—“ Well ! now you will be easy, I hope, for when Lady Sedgewood has once said a thing, she never retracts it, which is one of the many extraordinary qualities for which I married her. I have known hundreds of women who, upon this occasion, would have made a magnificent show of generosity, and have been impatient till the hour arrived when they could throw their honours, their very comforts, at the feet of the lovely young couple ; but they would have given many a long sigh after them when the deed was done, and have considered their successors as ever after their debtors. This is not Mercy’s way—*once resigned*, her sacrifice is made ; *once won*, she is yours for ever. You would be surprised that I married her, because I professed to do it for want of a companion, and she was the most silent woman of our acquaintance ; but I proved my judgment in women, for she has answered the purpose wonderfully well.”

“ I see every day some trait in my sister’s character which assures me of the real goodness of her heart ; but

*x a favourite word.*

unless some very extraordinary occurrence, like the present, induces her to speak, I cannot perceive her improved as a companion."

"But you must surely have perceived, since your return, that I talk ten times more than I used to do; for, like my grandfather, Sir Henry, of whom the historians truly observed, 'He was a man of few words,' I very seldom used to speak at all; whereas, finding that my silent wife had really a heart that beat responsive to a generous sentiment, and an understanding that fully comprehended a reason, I imperceptibly found pleasure in offering them to her, in return for the thousand silent attentions which my bodily ailments were ever receiving from her quiet tenderness and active affection; she understands this, and her gratitude is as pleasant to me as mine is amusing to her; and we are become the best company imaginable, for there is only one tongue and one heart between us."

"I rejoice in your happiness, my dear Sir Charles; but I have known a great deal, where there were two tongues and one heart, as you have often *silently* witnessed."

"Ay, my dear Thé, but yours was no common lot; had that angel been spared, your bachelor brother would still have borrowed a ray from the blaze of your happiness to light him to the grave; but we must not look back—come, let us think of our conqueror, and the most ready way to bring him, for as there is now a cessation of hostilities, he can come back with honour; and if I am a prophet, honours await, such as Brooksby may be proud to claim kindred with. It is many years since I went to court, and then I scarcely took a glimpse at them, for the Stuarts gave us all a sickening of royalty, I believe, and we have had no great taste for the German princes who succeeded them; but depend upon it, brother," said the baronet, rising, as he spoke, as high as the gout would let him, "depend upon it, when Frederick fills the throne, I will once more, with my boy in my hand, pay the tribute of honest respect to the sovereign I can honour; I will then say, that a Sedgewood, a descendant of that man whose rights even the conquering Norman acknowledged and upheld, a limb of that body which has defied bad kings, protected suffering kings, bled for a beloved prince, but never stooped to sue to any prince, can yet accept the kindness of a good one. You shall then see, brother, that——"

The entrance of the ladies, and tea, cut short the baronet's speech, but not his enthusiasm; from this time his mind was devoted to one object, that of seeing his nephew established near him; but as it was impossible that that nephew could bless his longing eyes for a very considerable period, he could not otherwise divert his impatience, than by projecting some plan in unison with his favourite pursuit. The house in which he resided was comfortable, being a modern mansion, built on a beautiful spot of ground, about a mile from that castle, in whose tremendous bulwarks his ancestors had lived in feudal times, the bounded sovereigns of a surrounding district, allowed ever to be the most beautiful and fruitful spot in the West-Riding, and on that account too often subjected to the horrors of war during the time of border ravages, and which, having been demolished, along with seven other castles, by command of the parliament, now presented a fine ruin, rather more pleasing to the artist than the surviving branches of the Sedgewoods, I apprehend, since the house they built immediately after did not, among its other beauties, embrace the picturesque ruins of this castle, though they were seen from many parts of the surrounding pleasure-grounds. Sir Charles Sedgewood heard his brother and niece speak of the many beautiful places they had seen abroad, and he determined to please himself, and, as he trusted, the future bride of his nephew, too, by erecting a suit of summer apartments, which should afford a prospect of every thing most beautiful in the vicinity of his mansion, and which should be furnished in a style worthy the rank and merits of the fair inhabitant. The most eminent projectors were consulted; the plan no sooner arranged than the workmen were employed; and long before the vessel arrived in India which was meant to convey the welcome intelligence of recall to his native land to Theodore, this friendly beacon was raising its benignant head, as if to beckon his return. The benevolent heart of Barbara now found a stimulus to exertion she had never found before; and in projecting improvements for her brother's marriage, there were times when her native vivacity returned in its pristine vigour, to the delight of her father and uncle; but there were others, when her own marriage preparations, and all their fatal circumstances, rushed on her mind, and overpowered it with unutterable anguish; for extremes were blended in

the fine sensibility and genuine warmth of her character ; but their channel was now turned to another object ; the good baronet, forgetful of himself, and unmindful of the short but salutary counsels of his lady, insisted on being carried out in his gouty chair, to witness the finishing stone laid on the top of the new building. This was not an uncommon exertion ; but he protracted his stay till the cold damps of evening fell ; and his enemy, which had been some days giving indications of his approach to the feet, was thrown upon the stomach ; and the generous baronet, after two hours of severe suffering, exchanged his fond hopes of seeing his family flourishing around him on earth, for a better seat among the family of heaven. His sudden death, at this critical time, was a severe shock to his widow and friends ; and the surrounding country felt it as a terrible affliction, the virtues of his successor only could alleviate.

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## CHAP. X.

What is life but to shift from side to side, from sorrow to sorrow ?

STERN.

THE activity of Sir Charles Sedgewood's mind, and his admirable method of managing his estate, and conducting his affairs, made him a loss to the neighbourhood, which was not likely to be fully compensated by the mild virtues and quiet habits of his successor, who was now entering his sixtieth year, and had lived too long in the happy privacy of undistinguished rank and scholastic leisure to adopt any other system, without deranging his habits, and destroying that perfect freedom which was, to a man of his habits, invaluable. It was not without reason that the late baronet had been at one period anxious to save a fortune : he saw that his brother, though the most affectionate of husbands, and the most tender of fathers, did not possess that kind of energy which was necessary in a man who at one time was the father of five sons, who might not be all, like himself, content to till a few paternal acres, and vegetate in virtuous retirement. The wisdom and virtue of his bro-

ther's life was undoubted ; but it was so little likely to be adopted by his sons, and still less by the wives his sons would be likely to choose, that the baronet saw some provision must be made to keep the younger branches of the Sedgewoods in their own place in society, or they must be compelled either to the disquietude of poverty, or the degradation of vicious dependence. When they were taken away, the dispersion of the family followed, and the baronet found himself growing richer than he expected ; though there was a pleasure in accumulation, under the idea that Theodore might yet return and enjoy it ; yet Sir Charles did not allow that encroaching fiend, the spirit of accumulation, to grow upon him ; he married a woman of small fortune, on whom he settled a handsome jointure ; he increased his establishment, extended his charities according to the judicious benevolence of his wife, and thus increased his happiness and his consequence, and placed the name of Sedgewood on the same footing it was a century before, as appears from a statement in the reign of ———

“ Stop, sir ! you will never get to the end of your story if you step back to the family muster-rolls.” *ha ha ha*

Madam, I obey ; but you have lost a fine opportunity of hearing something about King James I. when he went to take possession of his English crown. I am certain I have not shown you one of my family you don't like ; my poor uncle, of whom I am speaking, ma'am, was a fine, noble-looking man, with a Ramilies wig, and a face under it that Reubens might have been proud of sending down to the latest posterity ; he was good tempered, warm hearted, and high spirited ; not quite so interesting as his brother, I grant ; but I question whether you would not have cried at his funeral, especially if you had seen that brother, and could have beheld his face as he approached the family vault, where lay the ashes of her and her little ones, who was indeed

Belov'd till life's last sigh be o'er,  
And mourn'd till pity's self be dead.

At the earnest request of the present possessor, Lady Sedgewood remained in the family mansion until some information from India should arrive to justify her removal. When the first mourning was over, Sir Theodore and his daughter removed to London, that they might be so much

nearer the object of their anxiety on his landing. During their stay there, Miss Sedgewood was presented; and by a singular coincidence, Lady Caroline made her appearance at court, for the first time, also, in obedience to the long-repeated wishes of the earl; the beauty, the foreign air, and the well-known misfortune of the former, attracted much attention; and as Lady Caroline withdrew from the presence, whither Barbara was hastening, she inquired of the duchess of Athol, who had undertook her introduction—“Who was the lovely girl with such fine auburn tresses, so fine that she had never seen them equalled but once?”

The duchess knew nothing of Lady Caroline's story; she therefore answered immediately—

“She is, indeed, a lovely girl, the only daughter of Sir Theodore Sedgewood. That fine-looking old man is her father; I mistook him at first for a bishop, but very foolishly, for he is much more like an apostle.”

The duchess perceived her companion grew pale to faintness; she made her lean upon her arm, and they soon after left the room; but the idea of being so near to two people unknown, yet so very dear, became every moment a source of increasing perturbation to the still lovelorn Caroline. The sorrows, too, of the youthful Barbara, so like her own, gave her an additional interest, and she longed to fold her to her bosom, and call her sister. The duchess perceiving her agitation, and believing it proceeded wholly from the heat and the novelty of the scene, to a person of extremely retired habits, pressed forward, and increased the evil she sought to remedy; and Lady Caroline's trepidation was increased exceedingly. “What shall I do,” said the duchess, looking wistfully towards some of her friends. The nearest person was at that moment speaking to Sir Theodore; both the gentlemen came forward; the heart of Caroline palpitated more violently, as, seeing her situation, he took her hand, and drawing it gently under his own, followed the duchess. The air revived Lady Caroline, and she looked as if she would have spoken, but the sound of words died away upon her lips: Sir Theodore lamented that he had not the honour of being introduced, but begged her to believe he was happy in rendering this slight service; but entreated her not to fatigue herself by speaking. The sound of his voice, broken as it was by age, yet bore an affinity to the major's, and every note sunk into the heart of

Caroline; yet her natural timidity, the consciousness that many eyes were upon her, and most probably among the rest her father's, sealed her lips, but she could not refuse herself a tender pressure of the arm that was supporting her. Sir Theodore imputed this to increased weakness, and he besought her, in the most fatherly manner, to lean more upon him; and in order to reassure her, said—"I have a daughter, madam, who has been subject to much weakness of this kind."

"Yes! yes! you have *two* daughters," said Lady Caroline, with quickness, for her gasping breath scarcely admitted words, "and I—I——Oh, Sir Theodore, do you not know me? You must have heard of Caroline Ingleby."

"My God, I thank thee," said the baronet, while his gushing eyes bore witness how deeply his heart was affected, and for a moment he held the trembling girl to his bosom: they were now at the foot of the stairs, and not knowing when he might be permitted to see her again, he began instantly to inform her that he had sent for his son from India; that he was holding himself in readiness to invest him with the title and estates of his uncle, the hour he returned, and had come to London to learn what forms were necessary; and to receive him there; and that he hoped——but, alas! before the good man had the power to whisper that *dearest* hope, an old gentleman, adorned with the insignia of nobility, with an air of chilling civility said—"I will release you from your trouble, sir; the young lady may now take the arm of her natural protector."

*Unnatural* protector, Sir Theodore would have said, but he checked his words, but not the look of cool contempt with which he surveyed the nobleman, when gently disengaging the hand of Lady Caroline from his arm, and presenting it to her father—"The lady is now better, sir; it is not the first time the earl of Brooksbury has received a *restored* child from a Theodore Sedgewood, I believe."

At this moment the duchess turned round—"Good Heavens! how strange it is, that of all the people in the world, you see Sir Thé should be the person to support my young friend! Lord Mordaunt is just telling me that your son, the general, saved her brother, at the risk of his life, about seven years ago, from drowning. How very odd!—I dare say it was the remembrance of that very thing which help-

ed to affect poor Lady Caroline, for she turned pale the very moment she saw your daughter: no wonder: gratitude for so singular a favour was too much for her. I hear there never was such a man as your son, Sir Thé; so handsome, all the women in India are dying for him; so brave, that he is the very soul of the army; and so good, that the Gentoos consider him an object of idolatry."

The pale cheek of Caroline now glowed with roses, more vivid from their long desertion, and for a moment gave to the fond respectful gaze of the baronet a view of those charms which had captivated so entirely the affections of his son: the duchess, amiable, gay, and warm-hearted, thought only on the subject she was speaking of, and neither saw the blushing cheek of Caroline, nor the bilious one of her tortured father; she continued—"In short, I never heard of such a paragon; if he chooses, he may marry an Indian queen, and live in an ivory palace; or a Persian princess, and trample on diamonds—(surely, lady Caroline, you are not ill again?) or he may build a haram as large as the park, and stock it with Asiatic beauties, for his enemies admire him as much as his friends adore him, I am told; and he equally commands the services of both. I wish he were come back; the duke promises me his acquaintance, and assures me there is not a family in the kingdom that might not be proud not only of his acquaintance, but his alliance; in fact, that there is not a father in the kingdom who might not be proud of it."

"The duke is very good to entertain these sentiments, which my son, as far as relates to himself, certainly merits; but it is my misfortune, and his, to know there is *one* father in the kingdom who could refuse him."

"Some ignorant man, who does not know him," said the duchess, "undoubtedly; when he comes back, your lordship (turning to the earl) shall go to him, and unfold a tale of his noble daring in your son's defence, 'that shall harrow up his heart, and make his eyes'—my dear earl how you stare! you think I've forgot Shakspeare, but I have *not*; if you were to hear how I can recite—'Bow, stubborn knees, and heart with strings of steel,' you'd never forget me; or how admirable I can enact the death of Beaufort, when the 'busy meddling fiend has got hold of his poor conscience, and is making a pin-cushion of it to stick his fangs in;' then I have all the rest of the fine parts of his other speeches in

X take on cheek well done



the greatest perfection, such as—‘ Ah ! but to die, and go one knows not where ;’ and, ‘ In that sleep of death what dreams may come !’ and nothing can be finer than my enunciation of ‘ *swear !*’ there, my lord, I saw it run through you, and I am sure you must *feel this*, ‘ *Remember your oath !*’

The beseeching eyes of lady Caroline at this moment obtained the mercy they had long sought from the duchess, who, it will be perceived, had heard a good deal from Lord Mordaunt, as he led her through the lobby, where they had been forced to wait ; and it may be presumed, that although the duchess lived and died before quizzing had been talked of, yet it was plain she was no bad proficient in it ; and as she was considered a wit, and yet known to be a very good-natured one, several persons of distinction had assembled round her little party, to the great distress of Lady Caroline, who could not bear to see shame sit on her father’s brow, whatever were his just claims to the distinction. When the duchess ceased speaking, the group dispersed, walking away by two and three at a time, each whispering to the other what they had known or surmised of the affair alluded to by the duchess : she and Lady Caroline set off in her grace’s carriage, but the gentlemen returned to the drawing-room, where Sir Theodore was treated with the most marked respect, and the praises of his son the theme of universal panegyric. The earl of Brooksbury had once loved, always admired Major Sedgewood, but of late years had hated him ; he knew, however, perfectly well, that this hatred proceeded only from the sense he had of deserving his hatred, and the consciousness that he must be despised by him. He was now obliged to see, that the man he had scorned as a son-in-law, would have thrown that lustre on his declining years, which was, in his opinion, the only desideratum of life ; he learnt, too, that the Sedgewood estate was equal to the expense of any title royal beneficence might bestow, and he could not doubt but the Sedgewoods might obtain any thing in that way they chose to seek for ; and he was so well acquainted with the major’s talents, that he could have no doubt of his success in the cabinet being equal to that he had gained in the field. In him the name and honour of the earls of Brooksbury might have been preserved, much better, in fact, than by the marriage he had projected with the duke of Roverton, since the greater glo-

ry would have swallowed up the less ; and though the duke had married soon after his disappointment, he was still childless : in short, whatever way the earl looked, he beheld himself an isolated old man, every day becoming of less consequence in society ; unallied to the younger branches of his courtly circle, and forsaken by the old, who were either dropping into the grave, preparing for it, or clinging to their tender connexions for support they could not extend ; he had but one hold on life, one gentle being, who still smoothed the downward path of existence ; and would have softened all its asperities ; but he could not look at her without seeing the traces of past sufferings in her countenance, and remembering that he had driven her to conduct which had, in its effects, produced the celibacy he now lamented.

The earl, too much of a courtier to show the mortification he experienced, profited from the information he gained on this eventful evening, so as to learn what were the views of Sir Theodore respecting his son's future destination ; and as he could not help feeling, in case of the general's return, and accession to his father's rank, that his own consequence would be increased by becoming the father-in-law of a successful general, after consulting his pillow, he determined to forget the mortifications of the evening, and, if possible, even the contemptuous brow of Sir Theodore, and seek a conciliation where he had lately menaced an indignity ; he first began by promoting an interview between Miss Sedgewood and Lady Caroline, which was equally dear to them both, and which laid the foundation of a friendship that ended only with their lives. When the baronet learnt that Lord Brooksby was indeed desirous of conciliating an intimacy, he was too sincere a Christian to refuse him forgiveness, and too much attached to Lady Caroline to refuse complying with overtures which could not fail of being agreeable to her ; so that notwithstanding the vindictive emotions under which they first met, in the course of a few weeks, there was as much intimacy between them as was necessary for a general good understanding—*friendship*, between characters so opposite, was altogether impossible.

In the mean time another campaign had been renewed in India, and it became a question whether Theodore could leave the army under existing circumstances ; the first de-

spatches spoke still flatteringly of his valour, and there was reason to hope that success would be the forerunner of peace, which would undoubtedly bring him home; it did not appear from these letters that he had received the pressing solicitation of his uncle to return again. That sickness which ariseth from hope deferred sunk the renovated spirits, and preyed on the fragile form of Lady Caroline; but she exerted herself; and where she could not command fortitude, she submitted to patience. At length the last vessels arrived from India, and the general came not; but despatches respecting the army were still looked for by government. To beguile the tedious time, the earl proposed the party adjourning to his country seat, leaving a servant in London, who should lose no time in forwarding intelligence; to this they consented, and the young ladies delightedly withdrew to a scene more congenial to their feelings. Here the goodness of Lady Caroline had a field for the exercise of that benevolence which weaned her own heart from sorrow, while it relieved the sorrows of others; and here Barbara had an opportunity of seeing how nobly the wealth of a large income may be dispensed; her generous heart rejoiced in the extended means of good which was lately granted to her father, and which she had not yet had an opportunity of rejoicing in, for mere splendour had little to engage a heart that yet languished in its widowhood. Their rides and walks were frequently extended considerably, and had included nearly every village within five or six miles; but Lady Caroline remarked one day, they must go farther still, to include the circle of *all* her acquaintance; and as Miss Sedgewood expressed a desire to see *all*, the first fine morning afterwards they set out for the village of Thorp, which included in its way the temptation of spending an hour with Lady Egerton, who had long ere this been acquainted with the favourable circumstances in which her dear young friend's affairs now stood: after engaging to dine with her on their return, they proceeded to the entrance of the village, where they alighted; and Lady Caroline giving her arm to Miss Sedgewood, bent her steps towards a neat cottage, in front of which was a small garden, where two children were laid on the grass-plot, the elder presenting flowers and cakes to the baby, as if he had undertaken the important office of nurse, though himself was still young enough to claim the cares of one.

While the ladies stopped a moment at the wicket gate, to contemplate the lovely form of infantine affection, Miss Sedgewood remarked, that there was an unusual number of people in the cottage, and she had an idea it was some grand festival.

"Then we will not call to-day," said Lady Caroline.

At the sound of their voices the little boy looked up, and springing on his feet, cried out, as he ran into the house—  
"Mudder, mudder, she is comed; own lady is comed again.

"The urchin has discovered us, so we might as well go forward," said Lady Caroline, stepping on to the cottage.

A modest-looking young woman, neatly dressed in her holyday apparel, sprung to the door, and welcomed Lady Caroline with a smile that was instantly followed by a tear; but there was equal happiness in both, and Miss Sedgewood thought she had never seen welcome so gracefully expressed.

"My good Sally, I rejoice to see you well," said Lady Caroline, "but I fear I have broken in upon you at a bad time; (waving her hand to the rustic visitants to keep their places;) I wish I had come any other day."

"Surely not, my lady, for this will ever be the day, of all days in the year, I shall love the best, I be very sure."

"It is your wedding day, I guess, hey, Sally?"

"Yes, my lady, and what's more, 'tis the versary of that blessed day when you first came among us; God forbid I should ever forget it!" said Sally, again brushing a grateful tear.

"Yes, my lady," said a good-looking dark man, who had just took his youngest child in his arms; "and when, two years after, you procured my discharge, and I came home, I couldn't persuade her to be married till this day came round; and to tell your ladyship's goodness the truth, we have all been to brother Will's wedding this very morning."

William, with an awkward bow, now came forward, leading a blushing bride, who having never been seen by the fine ladies before, could not feel the ease in their presence experienced by those who had been the happy partakers of her bounty, and who owed every comfort they enjoyed to her goodness; but their conciliating manners

soon relieved her. Lady Caroline insisted on tasting their bride-cake—inquired where William's cottage lay; and by many kind inquiries proved that interest in their affairs so dearly estimated by the humble children of labour: she then begged the bride to tell her candidly if there was any way in which she could contribute to her happiness. The young woman, looking her new-made spouse in the face, hesitated. "Speak out to her ladyship, Nancy," said the husband, "if you have any thing to say, because for why, it does her heart good to help every body: if it hadn't a been for she, ye know Thomas and I should have been tossing on the salt ocean, or may be laid down in the bottom, and sister there wearing her heart away, instead of nursing her own children by her own fireside, and the man she loves sitting by her. A very great difference," added William, with a knowing nod, as he looked round at the humbler part of his auditory. Thus encouraged, the young woman ventured to say, that her father's lease for his little farm was nearly out, and she had been told that Lord Egerton was going to take it into the park, which made her very unhappy, lest their parents should lose their home in their old age.

"Haven't I told you," said William, interrupting her, with an offended air, "that I will——"

"I know you will do any thing you can, my dear William; but you know you told me to speak to madam, and so I did; for I was sure and certain that one word from she to any lord would settle the matter at once."

"You are perfectly right, Nancy," said Lady Caroline; "and depend upon it that my word shall not be wanting in behalf of your parents; and with so good a landlord as Lord Egerton, there is little doubt of my success: but have you no wants for yourself, Nancy?"

"Oh no, my lady," said the bride, as her eyes shot a beam of tenderness to her William, which dispelled the vexation that had made a transient visit to his generous, honest countenance.

The feeling heart of Lady Caroline was not slow to read the language of untutored feeling, and a gentle moisture rose to her eye as she said—"Well, Nancy, I will not forget either you or your parents; and may God grant that you may never know any contention with your husband, save which of you shall best fulfil your duties, or prove the

sincerity of your attachment." She then shook hands with Nancy, wished the party a good morning, and retired amid a silent but admiring sense of grateful love and respect.

All the way home, the ladies conversed on the sorrows and merits of Sally Handy, whose story my readers are already acquainted with, and in contriving some useful present for the new housekeepers. It was long since Lady Caroline had felt so truly alive to the sweet influences of hope, or dared to bring home a scene of happiness, similar to that she had witnessed, to her own heart. Miss Sedgewood perceived her happy friend was now allowing herself to rest on the sweet visions of long-protracted hope, and she rejoiced in her happiness; but it recalled forcibly the sense of her own situation, on which the sun (as far as regarded this world) was forever set, and that resignation only could be hers—an involuntary sigh reminded Lady Caroline of the melancholy difference now discernible in the fate of her she had often considered similar in suffering, and she checked her own spirits. After spending a pleasant day at Lord Egerton's, and pleading their little cause very successfully with his lordship, they returned home. They did not find either of their fathers in the usual sitting room; and on inquiry, found that the earl had retired to his room, and Sir Theodore was either there or gone into the grove—"Being, poor gentleman, quite overpowered as it were, so that he can neither speak nor any thing else," said the servant.

"Overpowered," said Miss Sedgewood; "what do you mean? is my father ill?"

"Yes, sure, miss; but you know nothing about it; and he said 'twas of no use sending for you; you should be happy as long as you could."

"Johnson, what is the matter?"

Lady Caroline, unable to speak, could only look the same terrible question.

"Why, ma'am, my lady, I'm very sorry to say that Dixon be come; and it seems there has been an engagement in the Ingees, and poor General Sedgewood, it seems, is——"

Lady Caroline dropt senseless on the floor; Johnson, alarmed, exclaimed—"Not dead, indeed, my lady; I did not say he was positive dead."

“ Is he—my brother!—speak!—is he alive ?”

“ I doubt *not*; there seems no chance of that.”

“ How you torture me! tell me all, *all*—I insist upon it.”

“ Why, ma'am, there was a terrible engagement, and the major, I mean the general, though I knew him a major, you know, miss, and a handsome man he was; but as I was saying, he led on his troops like a hero, and carried the day; but it is supposed he fell from his wounds, as he was seen streaming with blood just before the conclusion of the action. His body was not found; but the necessity there was of burying the dead immediately, gives too much room to suppose, that being disfigured with blood and dust, he was, in the hurry of the service, thrown into the general grave, as no other particulars have been heard of him.”

*miss Sedgwood*

Lady Caroline was slowly recovering her senses, in the arms of his weeping daughter, when Sir Theodore entered the room: he saw at once the dreadful information was given, and his sorrows were freely mingled with hers, who knew not till now how closely she had nurtured in her heart the germ of that hope which was now rent thus cruelly from her bleeding bosom; yet she was sensible of some consolation, from beholding the father of her beloved Theodore thus sympathizing in her grief, and endeavouring to bestow the support her sorrows so much wanted; but it was only in the depth of retirement her heart could gain fortitude to endure the stroke, since it was only there she could look up to that heavenly Father for strength to bear the burden of those sorrows with which he saw fit to afflict her.

When some days had been given to the first demands of nature on this dreadful occasion, during which time the earl of Brooksbury had seldom appeared among the mourners, he one day surprised his daughter, by proposing to remove her to his seat in Hampshire, as being likely to benefit her health and amuse her feelings; but he did not make any proposition of this nature to his guests.

Sir Theodore observed, that he had flattered himself the earl and Lady Caroline would accompany him to Yorkshire for that very purpose.

The earl “ was obliged, very much obliged to his dear friend, Sir Theodore Sedgewood; but the health of his invaluable daughter forced him to renounce that pleasure;

he knew the north air was bad for her constitution, which exactly resembled his own, whereas the sea breeze would prove restorative to both."

Lady Caroline, throwing herself into the arms of Miss Sedgewood, wept freely; and the pitying eye of Sir Theodore said so plainly—"they ought not to be parted," that the earl could not misunderstand its language; he therefore observed, that the young ladies were evidently of great disservice to each other, by encouraging inordinate affliction; and that, for his part, he was quite shocked to perceive Miss Sedgewood suffer so much from the claims so perpetually made on her sympathy.

In a few days these amiable women bade each other a long and sad farewell.

Each of these exemplary daughters became to her parent the tender solace of his age, and made up to him, as far as it was possible, the privations and chasms which every man in the decline of life must necessarily feel; but there was a material difference in the success of their endeavours; for whilst one daughter was enabled to smooth the passage of life to her parent, the other, with the same views, equal tenderness, and more meekness, appeared to be the source of many a thorn in the path of life to hers. The matter stood thus.

Notwithstanding the seclusion in which these ladies endeavoured to live, yet their rank in life, their personal charms, and their well-known virtues and accomplishments, for several years rendered them, in their several circles, objects of admiration; and they were sought in marriage by men of rank and respectability. On these occasions, the earl of Brooksbury, if the proposal accorded with his notions of aggrandizement, never failed to demand his daughter's acceptance of it; and when she told him that her heart forbade the union, he became so fretful, peevish, and unkind, her existence was rendered burdensome from his ill humour. On the other hand, when Sir Theodore represented to his daughter, that "he should have much comfort in seeing her the wife of some worthy man, who should become the protector he must soon cease to be, and who, by adopting her name, might still preserve the memory of their ancient house," and she too replied, that her heart was whelmed beneath the wave that destroyed her only



love, the good man gave a gentle sigh, and said, he would never distress her by urging his wishes.

The consequence of the earl's distressing pertinacity was this—Lady Caroline adopted the idea, that, notwithstanding the silence which still sealed his fate, her beloved Theodore was still living, and that her father was aware of it; and she was the further confirmed in this, from his positively insisting on her dropping all correspondence with the Sedgewood family. This hope, however vague and groundless, was the support of her mind through many years of suffering, and was another proof how frequently our successful sins become our eventual punishers, since the consciousness of having been once duped by the earl's duplicity had awakened a suspicion in her mind, which was, in fact, without foundation; but which became the groundwork of that meek, but steady opposition to his wishes, it is not probable would have taken place under any other circumstances.

On the other hand, Miss Sedgewood felt it a duty and pleasure to obey the wishes of a father, so reasonable in themselves, and offered to her with so much delicacy.—Among others who sued for her attention, was the honourable Mr. Elland, a son of Lord St. Allens, a young man of mild, engaging manners, graceful, though slight in his person, generous and amiable in his disposition, but of delicate health, and retired habits. For this interesting young man, Barbara felt a degree of tenderness, which she endeavoured to improve into that affection which might enable her to fulfil to him the duties of a wedded partner; and as she had every opportunity of cultivating favourable impressions, and the heart of a woman of sensibility could not have many more engaging objects presented to her choice, the baronet had soon the satisfaction of perceiving that his daughter entertained a very serious prepossession in his favour, and that he had every prospect of seeing her perhaps nearly as happy as she could have been with him who was the object of a more ardent passion. But, alas! there appears a fatality attending the loves of this excellent, but most unfortunate lady—the young man, who was devoted to her in the most fond and tender manner, declined in his health as he approached the zenith of his happiness, and before the period fixed on for their marriage, he became far advanced in a decline. As pity was now added to friend-

ship, Miss Sedgewood found herself more and more attached to the dear being from whom she was about to be separated for ever; and before the final scene took place, she was convinced, from bitter experience, that it is indeed possible to love a second time, with all the tenderness, if not the violence, of a first attachment; and so acute were the sufferings she experienced from this second disappointment, that even her father never could prevail on himself to lead her mind towards forming another engagement; and he now looked only to the divine mercy to console the mind of his daughter, and teach resignation to himself.

There were not wanting, at that time of day, those who censured both these ladies, as romantic, affected, and ridiculous, in thus suffering the disappointments of love to prevent them from enjoying the charms which state, splendour, and fortune, still held out for them—"Such lovesick airs they thought well enough in their teens; but when a woman got towards thirty, 'twas positively silly to the last degree—'men would die, and worms would eat 'em;' but it did not follow, that women were to pine to death after them, so long as others were left in the world, ready and willing to supply their places." Yet if either of these amiable women, duly considering this convenient doctrine, had taken to themselves a spouse, she would have said to her neighbour—"How true it is, that fickleness and inconstancy are the characteristics of women! the most melancholy fate binds not her heart; the most awful vows impose no shackles on her conscience: let a poor man be once laid in his grave, 'tis all over with him; he is forgotten, notwithstanding his merit, his constancy, and his misfortunes; the first upstart that comes in her path is accepted; and notwithstanding all the parade of sorrow and sentiment these sighing ladies have made, they are like the old proverb, and conclude, 'that a living ass is better than a dead lion.'"

This was the way "she used to talk to her neighbours" the middle of the last century; but she is so wonderfully improved since then, that, in a similar case, she would have informed you not only of a lapse of sentiment; but, very probably, a lapse of conduct in the ladies. In this case, "it would have been no wonder they remained single so long, seeing they looked upon themselves as w<sup>o</sup>ment that, indeed, poor creatures, they had been as good <sup>as</sup> sentences as I ap-

—for her part she should be sorry to make reflections on any body, in a case which seemed so very hard; nor did she like to give ear to such things; but certainly there was something very odd in Lady Caroline's being so long at Lord Egerton's; during which time, to her own certain knowledge, for she had it from Lady Egerton's maid's sister's daughter, she never wore any thing but loose morning gowns for six months, which had a very odd look with it, especially as she took a journey, rambling, nobody knew where, so soon after. It must be granted, Lady Egerton was the most correct woman in the world; quite a prude indeed; but prudes had often concealments of their own; nobody knew what had passed to herself in her youth, so she might have a fellow feeling; there is no saying how the matter was; but certainly there are people in the world who must suspect Lady Caroline, notwithstanding her sanctity and modesty."

Then, as to poor Miss Sedgewood, "she, poor thing, was barely eighteen, and the marquis under age; there was no saying what might happen with two young people, when there was no mother to take care of the girl. It always seemed strange that Mr. Sedgewood should go dangleing into Italy, and them places, instead of bringing his daughter home at once. Nobody knew what happened abroad; but one of the men said—'His young mistress was very bad at Florence, with seeing a picture so like the marquis, that it made her faint on the spot, and she wouldn't go out again for a fortnight.' Well, well, I scorn an ill-natured conclusion as much as any body; but it is much to me if a miniature of the marquis wasn't the picture that touched the poor girl so nearly at that time. But, however, these things had best be forgot and forgiven; only, when people set themselves up for saints, as it were, and make a fuss about their constancy, and all that, one cannot help remembering these things. It was a happy thing poor Elland died when he did; he was a poor creature; and his gay wife (for gay she is by nature) would have led him a fine dance, if they had gone to live in London."

Such is the improved state of the society we live in, that the spirit which used merely to find fault with its neighbour, to is now so obliging as to *make* the faults, and place them in health as bymodating a point of view, that we cannot help before the pthem, and wondering at the stupidity of our former advanced in a

blindness, which prevented us, in the common incidents and every-day occurrences of life, from seeing most wonderful intrigues, most solemn contrivances, and most gigantic vices, which those, thus gifted with this admirable second sight, never fail to observe. I cannot help believing myself, that the optics of many of my good neighbours experience this species of divination, much in the same way that the inhabitants of the Highlands are said to possess theirs; and as that is peculiar to the northern parts of the island, which thus possesses a decided superiority over the southern in the art of foretelling, I do not see any reason why we should not claim to ourselves like honours in the art of *mistelling*, which I therefore propose to consider as likewise proceeding from second sight; and which, as being equally like with the other to proceed from the mysterious influences of bad spirits, may, with considerable propriety, so far as it is deemed "a gift," be supposed a devilish gift; and so far as it is considered an art, be called a *black art*.

We are told that the Highland seers, in the moments of the exercise of their functions, fall into various contortions, and evince terror of the object before them; are sometimes flushed and sometimes palè, and seem willing to fly from the vision, which is, nevertheless, necessarily impressed upon their imagination; so that they are evidently acting, and acted upon, by a power superior to their own, and, as they would insinuate, very opposite to their own will and nature. In like manner I have frequently observed that persons possessed with the southern second sight, with whatever anxiety they may hasten to reveal their oracles, and however evident it may be to all around them, that they are as full of inspiration as the Pythian priestess, and can no way rest, eat, or even breathe, till they have got vent for the foul spirit which is inwardly tearing and consuming them, yet never fail to betray certain symptoms of uneasiness, or express themselves in terms of self-condolence on being actually obliged to deliver that to the world which they are manifestly unable to conceal any longer than I have observed in the little circle of my neighbours which I mentioned in my first chapter, and who will, I well know, sit in judgment on every chapter of this, my first book; that whenever Mrs. Featherbottom sits in judgment on her acquaintance, she generally precedes her sentences on three distinct fosses of the head, a long, and, as I ap-

prehend, very painful tension of the vertebræ; and then, with nasal twang, quite distinct from the voice with which she inquires after your health, or invites you to the breast of a chicken, she prefaces her vision of vice by declaring—"She is quite sorry to say it, and really would not say it for the world, if it was not proper that such wickedness should be discountenanced;" and then proceeds to say what it is plain she would not, or could not, keep an hour longer on any account.

Before Lady Frances Stickerton commences *her* operations, I observe that her eyes are affected with a certain disorder, which occasions them to dart out long, malignant glances, as if to take in the sense of the company at one moment, and to see where their vulnerable parts lie in another, so that she may be enabled at once to wound the absent, and cut the present by the same sally—thus she addresses a handsome woman on the subject of some fallen beauty, who may thank her fine face for her present dishonour; and she tells the mother of a family, of the disgraceful, ruinous conduct of her neighbour's children; yet she too winces under the demon who commands her, and never fails to declare—"It makes her blood run cold to hear of such things;" while she draws up her gown, strokes down her apron, and sidles in her seat, as if her chair bottom had been stuck full of pins with the points upwards.

Poor Mrs Maxwell, without being possessed of the more malignant powers of the second sight, and who really relates mischief for sorrow's sake, experiences the same symptoms in a milder degree; yet she never begins a tale of slander without giving several deep, doleful sighs, and appearing to turn her eyes inwards, as if to say—"Ah! there is sorrow enough in my heart, whatever there may be in those I am going to talk about."

Violent flushing of the face, an unusual trepidation in the tongue, a quick tremulous motion of the hand or foot, and an exclamation of—"I really have no patience to see such things!" and many other febrile symptoms, indicate the distressing sensations experienced by both Mr. and Mrs. Parley on these occasions; while an extreme anxiety to speak, a distressing watchfulness of the eye, a languid listlessness towards all around them, and an irritable restlessness, 'contending with that listlessness in all that concerns themselves,' mark the nervous affection under which

Katharine's meaning

Misses Robinson suffer when the *slandera romancia* is upon them, so different, and yet so distressing are its effects, so manifest its contortions.

In Mrs. Manby, I must allow the possessing demon is a merry one, nor does he condescend to use any of the eternal apologies of—"For my part, I don't believe a word of it; and I should be the last person to credit it; but what can one do? facts are stubborn things."—Or—"I am sure it grieved me to the heart—I was inexpressibly hurt; but there is no denying it:" on the contrary, this lady boldly promulgates whatever she hears, with such emendations and comments, that two thirds of the edition may be fairly considered her own; and as she makes few converts to her assertions, nor seems desirous of making any, but retails scandal for the simple pleasure of proving how fine an opportunity her neighbours' errors afford for the exercise of wit, volubility, and mirth, which is probably the reason why she suffers less than others in delivering her opinions and decisions. In the case of Doctor Cantharides, the operation of the inspiring demon is exactly the reverse; for although his bantling falsehoods seem to be a puny race, and present themselves in a form so equivocal, being garnished and tricked out with all convenient *truths*, yet he parts with them with as much difficulty as if they were giants, a circumstance which can only arise from a consciousness, that although, like "the locusts, they are a pigmy race, yet they go forth to destroy the land;" and it is impossible to see the doctor settle his wig three times, by violent twitchings at the ears, draw up his mouth and chin, or witness the general cramp which purses his lips at the moment of speaking, without being sensible that he suffers equally with the Highland seer, who perceives a procession of carf candles and shrouds, with his own bringing up the rear.

"Pray, sir, what have you done with the history of your grandfather?"

My dear madam, I was talking of my neighbours, and telling you their faults; and if you have any sympathy in your nature, you must forgive me—it is one of those things which ever detain people, whatever may be the urgency of their business, from the woman of quality, who has twenty-seven visits to pay in one morning, to the poor gossip, who meets her neighbours at the baker's shop, when she is fetch-

desembled  
9000

ing a loaf for half-a-dozen hungry children ; what an amazing progressive distance is between them ! but they have one thing in common, one little propensity, which alike marks them daughters of Eve—" They only just stop to mention to one person what they have heard that is bad of another person, that is all." I will return now, my dear madam, to my grandfather with all convenient speed ; but as he is now in the East Indies, which is a place at a very considerable distance, and, moreover, in his grave, a place we are willing to believe still more distant, I think we will take another volume for the recommencement of his story, which volume, I trust, will travel with amazing celerity over the remaining adventures of my ancestors, as I really feel impatient for the honour of presenting myself more immediately to the contemplation of my dear, patient, accommodating readers ; having always observed, that although people take pleasure in displaying the good parts, or the wonderful enterprises and dismal sufferings of those who are dear to them, yet they have a still greater complacency in detailing such things as are exhibited, accomplished, or endured by themselves ; and so great is the satisfaction derived by such relation, that, in many instances, it supersedes even the pleasure of talking of our neighbours ; and it will be rarely found, that a confirmed egotist is a great scandal monger ; and though appearances at present may contradict the assertion, yet I declare, upon the honour of a Sedgewood, that so much more highly do I esteem the former character than the latter, that it is my sincere hope, " to that complexion I shall come at last."

# SAYS SHE TO HER NEIGHBOUR,

*What ?*



FOUR VOLUMES IN TWO.

BY

AN OLD-FASHIONED ENGLISHMAN.

---

Oh ! still be mine the gen'rous wish—to bless  
And wipe the streaming tear from pale Distress,  
Make keen-ey'd Malice hide her guilty head,  
O'er the dim mind bright Truth her lustre shed,  
Celestial Freedom ev'ry charm unfold,  
And firm Integrity the Fair uphold.

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VOLUME II.



NEW-YORK:

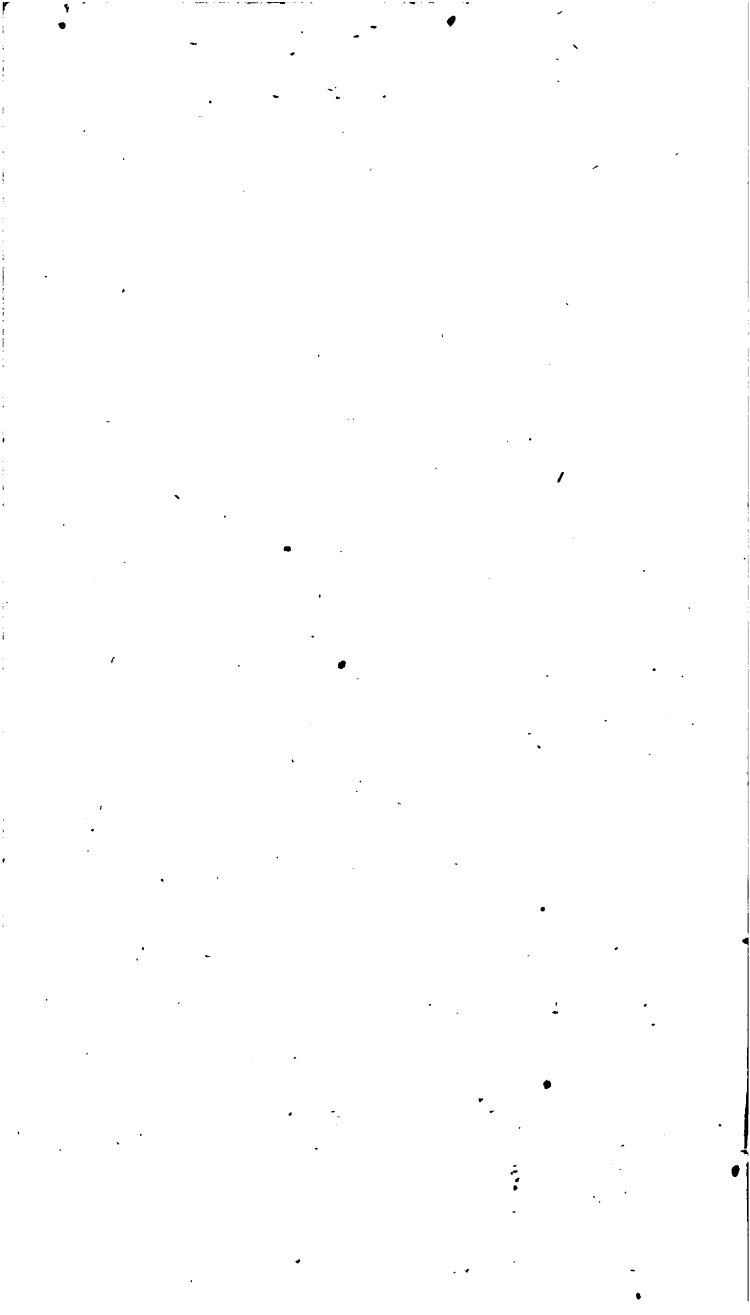
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1815.





## *Says She to her Neighbour, What?*

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### CHAP. I.

And shall I see his face again?  
And shall I hear him speak?  
My heart with joys so wond'rous fain,  
I fear the thing will break. SCOTCH BALLAD.

THE earl of Brooksbury, after a long and wearisome confinement, slept with his fathers; and after his sole surviving heiress had committed his remains to the family mausoleum, had requited his faithful servants, and paid many legacies he never left, and many charities he never ordered, after giving such time to the decencies of grief as were due to his relationship and her character, set out to visit her still dear friends at Sedgewood Park, that place on which her youthful mind had imaged all the charms of paradise, and where her maturer years had hoped to meet the meed of earthly felicity, as pure as mortals can reasonably hope to enjoy it. It was now near eleven years since she had parted with those faithful friends; and her correspondence had been nearly closed for the last six, during which time she had been entirely confined to her father's room, and interdicted all intercourse with a family, whom he used to stigmatize as the destroyers of his peace, and the encouragers of her disobedience.

Now-a-days we all know that when young ladies have got a passion for calling each other dear friends, they never fail to have, likewise, a most violent mania for scribbling, and these two violent impulses generally travel together, for it is seldom found that the friendship survives the correspondence; but with the ladies of other days, the thing we find was possible; for though the correspondence died a

Says She to her Neighbour, What?

violent death, the friendship, even without this aliment, could live and flourish.

It is impossible to describe the tender emotions which affected these amiable women on this meeting, and with what pleasure Miss Sedgewood led her amiable friend to the couch of him who had long nourished for her a truly paternal regard; and often bitterly lamented that her father's ambition and peculiarities of temper had prevented his enjoying more of her society.

Sir Theodore was still a handsome, fine old man; his figure was a little bent, and many wrinkles were added to the lines of his face; but his complexion was clear, and the mild lustre of his blue eyes still animated his countenance. His daughter was blooming in health, and perhaps as handsome a woman as she had ever been; but her figure, though good, was no longer that of the agile romp, for she was possessed of as much *en bon point* as made the country people style her, not unaptly, a comely lady. The ravages of time were more visible in their lovely guest; sorrow, more than years, had dimmed the lustre of her radiant eyes, and robbed her cheek of its roses; and amid her brown tresses were threads of silken white, spun by the cold hand of early grief; but her form was still inimitably fine, and the form and colour of her arms and neck might have formed a model for the sculptor. Arrayed in her mourning habiliments, she gave the idea of her being a widow, to those who did not know her; and never were the traces of that tender melancholy, which bessems her who has lost her wedded lord, more strongly or more sweetly imprest on any human countenance than hers presented.

The time, the talents, the affections of Miss Sedgewood, had long been devoted to her father, and to the various duties her station in life now claimed; with her active pursuit of benevolence, she regained her spirits and established her health; and though she never could forget that some things were, and were most dear to her, yet still she was enabled to rejoice in the blessings which remained; and she received the power of adding to the comforts of her dear Lady Caroline, as one of the greatest Heaven could bestow. She soon perceived that the constitution of her friend had been severely injured, not only by her sorrows, but her long habits of watching by the couch of her sick father; and having, from the same tender motives, made herself acquaint-

ed with medicinal restoratives, she now seriously set herself to raise up, as far as it was possible, this beauteous ruin; and to complete her work, became desirous that the family should remove to the seaside; and as Scarborough was at no great distance, the baronet, though now advancing to his eightieth year, made no objection, observing, he was now supported by two daughters instead of one; and on such pillars, even age and infirmity might lean contentedly.

Lady Caroline found herself considerably restored by the sea breeze, and still more by the attentions of her beloved Barbara, who had the double satisfaction of perceiving her father equally improved; but not unmindful of the claims of her situation in life, she would not allow herself to return with these dear friends, though she promised herself the pleasure of renewing her visit on the following summer; she returned to dispense blessings to all around her; of her it might be truly said, "when the eye saw her, it blessed her, and the ear gave witness unto her;" like the fragrant lily, her pale cheek bowed down, yet shed the odours of paradise on all around it.

As it was not possible that the baronet could choose to travel far from his own seat, Lady Caroline could not press her friends to visit her; but no sooner did returning spring second the wishes of Miss Sedgewood, than she arranged her affairs, and again delighted them with her presence, which appeared to renovate the baronet, though he was evidently much more feeble than the preceding summer, and was under a decided necessity of declining their projected visit to the seaside; though he urged the ladies not to give up this scheme, assuring them he should be happy to get rid of them; yet they would not return his compliment; and each, as they looked towards the other, seemed to say, we shall have the sea always near us; but he will not be always near us.

One morning, after a little raillery of this kind, the vicar of Fairborough happening to call on Sir Theodore, the ladies begged he would have the goodness to excuse them, and supply their places to Sir Theodore, while they made some calls in their neighbourhood. These calls were on the poor, and were generally made on foot, for Miss Sedgewood had too much delicacy in her charity to intrude the appearance of wealth on the children of poverty when she could avoid it, and too much of that spirit, which shrinks

from observation at such moments, to suffer even her servants, old and faithful as they were, to witness her actions ; they therefore rambled out, as if for a stroll in the park ; and had relieved one aching heart of a load of wo, and were hastening to sooth the bodily infirmities of another child of sorrow, when they had occasion to cross the turnpike road, which was dusty ; and a heavy stage wagon at that time coming past, they stood still, with their eyes fixed upon the ponderous vehicle, on which " York and Scarborough" were written in flaming characters.

As it passed, Lady Caroline still looking after it, her friend inquired if she was wishing to engage a seat in it, on its return, for Scarborough, as it appeared a very snug conveyance for their projected expedition ?

" I am looking," said the lady, " at the poor man in the inside ; he appears a foreigner, for his dress is a mixture of costume that indicates at once poverty and gentility."

" Poor thing," said Miss Sedgewood, " we will cross the road now, and from the next field we can easily come up to the wagon, for you see the road winds round it, and we shall see what he is ; I always feel particularly anxious to do a little service to a stranger, for I have lived enough in foreign countries myself to feel the value of little attentions."

While she thus spoke, the wagon, which had been descending a gentle slope from the spot where they were slowly walking, stopped ; the poor man alighted, and was seen to put something into the wagoner's hand, at which he looked, and offered it back ; but the stranger, after putting back his hand, turned to the right at a pretty brisk pace ; the wagoner looked after him for some time, and once or twice seemed on the point of following him ; but, at length, as if he considered it a better thing to follow his horses, walked slowly after them.

Female curiosity is proverbial ; and I have never pretended to say that even these excellent women were without it ; when, as they met the wagoner at the bottom of the field, they both asked him if he knew any thing of the poor man he had set down ; and if he was a foreigner ?

" Why, madam," said the man, addressing Miss Sedgewood, whom he knew, " he be the queerest man I ever seed ; he's quôte a tatterdemalion loike, and still he's soa genteel somehaw, he sets a body all of a wonder : I suu

him walkin ont road last niet, and I offer'd him a lift, for I thout he looked as thof he'd seen better days; and I fun he'd just cum frae Russy, which is a grit way off; and he'd noa monny but queer shillins like this'n, an they wodn't take it this marnin for pay for's breakfast, an monstrous mad I wor; but I tuke care he didn't want for all that."

"You did right," said Miss Sedgewood, as she drew half-a-guinea from her purse, and offered it to the good-natured wagoner.

"Noa, noa," said the man, drawing back, "I thank ye all the seame, madam; but I doesn't want it; there be that does, and ye'll find 'em out, I'm sure, if they are to be fund. Here's the queer shillin as he geed me, an he told me niver to gif it back to any body but his sel; but I was loath to take it, very loath; but sumhow he commanded me, and I was sich a fool I tuk it; if I thout as how he'll want it, as pur as I luik, I'd a geen him a crown-piece in change for it, soa I wod."

"The stranger seems to have won your heart, honest friend," said Lady Caroline.

"He has, madam, that's sure," said the poor fellow, drawing his rough hand across his eyes; "for I niver seed sich a man; he ha been in aw sorts o' coontries, hot an cawld; an he's as broon as a Molotter, an goes wi a little limp ratherly; an for all that he looks like a lard or a barrownite to my mind."

While this conversation was passing, the object had got far on his way; and the ladies regretted that they had not checked their informer when he first passed them; he was now obliged to run off; and they lamented, as many others have done, that they had let slip an opportunity of relieving one to whom they might have been of service; as however he had taken the road which led to the park, and would probably pass close by the lodge, they hoped yet to hear more of him, if he were as distressed as their fears had represented him; and conceiving it would be wrong to leave the relief they could bestow on one object to make what might be a fruitless chase after another, they made their intended call on a poor woman, to whom they administered medicine, and every other help she wanted, and then returned home the shortest way, intending to send a servant to watch the motions of the stranger, if he was to be found in the neighbourhood.

Occupied with the thoughts this incident had given rise to, they walked silently along; and were just entering the park by a private door, in the part where it was nearest to the house, when they heard one person say to another, at some distance—"Pray, friend, who lives at this house now?" On looking towards the place from which the voice proceeded, they perceived, to their great satisfaction, the poor man leaning over the paling; his back was towards them; and he was speaking to a cottager, who was coming from the house with a basket of broken victuals towards the gate they were about to enter; they both stood still, and heard the man reply surlily—"Whoa lives there! why whoa shud live there but his honor? maist beggarfoakes knows pretty well where Sir Theodore lives, I believe, more's the pity, say I."

"Sir Theodore Sedgewood is an *old* man," said the stranger, "if he be the person I have seen."

"Aye, *old* enough to be easily tuk in by ony tramper's tale," returned the man, just then opening the gate; and to his utter confusion seeing the ladies, who he well knew would disapprove his manner of speaking of his benefactor, he set down his basket, pulled off his hat, and held the gate open.

"I am extremely sorry to find," said Miss Sedgewood, glancing her eye towards the basket, "that this gate has been so long open to one whose ungrateful, churlish heart can not only refuse even the kindness of a civil word to a fellow creature he believes to be in distress, but can even dare to reflect upon the hand that has so long upheld him. Go, Benjamin, I shall not enter the gate while you hold it; I must have some *words* with the person your manners have insulted; but, depend upon it, these are the *last* I shall address to you."

As Miss Sedgewood turned indignantly from the man, and Lady Caroline was commenting upon the contrast of his manners with those of the wagoner, they perceived that the subject of his ill humour was advancing towards them, undoubtedly drawn by having necessarily witnessed Miss Sedgewood's reproof; before they had time to observe on the singularity of his appearance to each other, the man, with an air at once mild and assured, advanced towards them with a quickened step—stopt—looked earnestly at Miss Sedgewood, who was a little advanced, then

throwing the old military cap he wore on the ground, said, in a voice of great emotion—"Pardon me, madam, if I ask abruptly, are you not Barbara, marchioness of Blandington!"

"I am Barbara Sedgewood," said she, starting with fear; for there was a wildness in the eye and the manner of her interrogator that alarmed her; and stepping back, she seized the arm of her companion, whose agitation even exceeded hers—"My dear Lady Caroline," said she, "what shall we do? this poor man—who?—what can he be?"

The man sprung forward; he gasped for breath; dropping on his knees, he caught the skirts of Lady Caroline, and, unable to speak, looked earnestly in her face. Terrified at his manner, she yet gazed at his expressive features without fear, when, suddenly clapping her hand to her forehead, she cried, in agony—"Speak! oh, speak one word! it is my Theodore!" and dropt senseless in the arms that were already clinging round her, but were, an instant after, as lifeless as her own; while the astonished sister, bursting into a hysteric passion of tears, was utterly unable to assist, or, indeed, to comprehend the scene before her, and kneeling over both, was unable to assist either.

The cottager, who had been sneaking away, beheld with pleasure a scene of distress which he hoped would enable him to regain the footing he had lost in the family; and, again setting down his load, ran hastily to the house, and, by his report, brought speedy assistance; even the old housekeeper, who was very aged, and moreover much afflicted with the rheumatics, would go herself to assist Lady Caroline, and, notwithstanding her affliction, was nearly the first upon the spot. The moment she beheld her ladyship, even in death, embracing a beggar-looking man, the fact that it could be no other than her young master, instantly rushed to her mind, and as the object she had long considered of the highest importance of any being on earth, she applied herself immediately to the care of *him*, observing to her attendant—"That women often fainted and came to again; but a man's fainting was indeed a sad thing." The moment she could collect her scattered forces, the good creature insisted on his being carried gently into her own room, and laid on the couch; and having seen Miss Sedgewood far enough recovered to attend to Lady Caroline, she followed the stranger, who revived with the



motion ; but being earnestly entreated not to exhaust himself by speaking, and assured by the good woman that Lady Caroline would soon be well, suffered himself in silence to be removed by the astonished attendants, who, though ordered by Mrs. Jenkins to take him to her own room, were told positively to enter by the hall door, as it was by far the most proper.

At the moment the long-lost Theodore once more entered the mansion of his fathers, the devout housekeeper, dropping upon her knees, audibly thanked God that she had lived to see this happy day. Sir Theodore and the vicar had already heard much bustle in the house, and their application to the bell for information had so entirely failed to procure it, that on their hearing the re-entrance of the servants, the vicar stepped out to inquire what was the matter. At that moment poor Jenkins was on her knees alone, as the men had carried the general into her room, and the other party had entered by another door : the appearance of the fat housekeeper was at this moment rather ludicrous than sacred, for though her warm affections and sincere piety had induced her conduct, yet she had utterly forgot she could not rise without help, for which she was hawling pretty freely when the good clergyman willingly accorded it. She told him instantly of the great discovery ; but begged he would break it as his worship's wisdom should think proper to the baronet, as she should not wonder if the surprise was too much for a person so advanced in years, for she found it had affected her wonderfully. The vicar was so astonished, that he could not credit the tale, till he had himself seen the person professing himself to be General Sedgewood, and therefore hastened to the room where the stranger was stretched on a sofa, and who immediately recognising *him*, though he had not seen him for some years before his quitting England, soon put the joyful tidings beyond doubt : it appeared strange to the good vicar that the general should recollect him, since he confessed himself, that without a very close examination, he could not return the compliment ; but he confessed that, to be sure, dress made a good deal of difference. To which, the stranger replied, with a faint smile—" True, my good sir ; nor has the different manner in which our time has been spent made a less difference, I apprehend."

*long-lost*

Mrs. Jenkins here interposed, to entreat the stranger would take an anodyne of her own making, and to give strong hints that the gentleman should be left some hours to repose, as she found he had been walking all night, and had only just come from shipboard; she accompanied these hints by darkening the room; and the surrounding group obeyed her mandate, the clergyman hastening to reveal the tidings to Sir Theodore. It is probable that even the great bodily fatigue the general had recently undergone, would not have procured sleep under the extreme agitation of joy which he now experienced, if this friendly soporific had not calmed the disorder of his nerves, and caused him soon to lose, in placid forgetfulness, the delightful visions which still swam before his eyes, like the dreams of morning.

Before the time when the good clergyman had opened his joyful mission, the senses of the long-lamented wanderer were steeped in forgetfulness, which proved a beneficial circumstance, as the happy, yet only half-believing, baronet insisted on being led to his son immediately; of him it might be truly said,

“Joy seiz’d his wither’d veins, and one bright gleam,  
Of setting sun shone on his evening hour.”

When he entered the housekeeper’s room, his son was extended on a couch, in a deep and apparently comfortable sleep; the care of the good Jenkins had thrown over him a rich quilt, and his head was covered by a cambric handkerchief, so that the outward marks of poverty did not assail the feelings of the good baronet, in the way experienced by Lady Caroline and his sister; yet when the old man gazed on the time-furrowed countenance, and the whitening locks of his son, that son who had left him glowing with manly beauty, and blooming with health, when, for a moment, he considered what must have been the years of captivity, toil, and suffering, which alone could have kept him so long from his country, and unknown to his friends, his heart sunk, and the drops of sorrow and pity rolled down his venerable cheeks. As he still gazed, the sleeping man smiled, as if enjoying some imaginary bliss; and in that smile the fond father more fully recognised the child of his heart, the *first-born* child, who, graced with his mother’s smile, had lisped the name of father, and left an im-

pression on his heart, neither erased by the cares, the sorrows, nor the joys of half a century; and as the good man raised his glistening eyes to Heaven, as if by an act of especial gratitude, to register his awakened emotion, he presented an object for a painter to copy, when he would express the language of the devout high priest, "Now let thy servant depart in peace, for my eyes have seen thy salvation."

When the general awoke, he found himself attended by an old man he had known from a boy, and who, although not a very handy valet, was one of the most welcome he had ever known: his own faithful John had died in India many years before, and had received from his kind master those attentions on his sick bed, which he was accustomed to bestow: the memory of John was revived on this occasion, and the tribute of respect given to his virtues; but how much had not the general to remember and to feel—how much to say, and to hear! yet he could only *feel*.—In silence he beheld his father, and pressed the venerable form that wept for very joy; in silence too he kissed the pale cheek of his Caroline, and gazed upon her with eyes whose tenderness shamed the cold language of words, and mocked the feebleness of its powers. The whole evening passed in silence, interrupted by gentle sighs, or trembling words, that were the heralds of abundant tears.

But these were not the symptoms by which the same emotion was manifested in the ancient town of Fairborough, which was no sooner fully satisfied of the truth, than its six musical bells, more sweet than loud, were instantly called to proclaim the joyful tidings; numbers running through the streets, made directly for the park; and Mrs. Jenkins found a demand upon her cellars, which even their abundant stores could scarcely supply; an immense bonfire blazed, jovial huzzas resounded, and the whole country were assured that the long-lost heir of Sedgewood was restored to his country; and in every house for twenty miles round, *she* was telling her neighbour what had happened to him, before he had once opened his mouth on the subject, or any one of his family had been capable of saying, whence comest thou?

One declared that poor Mr. Theodore had returned with a wooden leg, and all his teeth knocked out; another insisted that his arm was in a sling, and his right eye cover-

ed with a patch; while a third maintained, that though he had his limbs, yet his poor dear body was tattoo'd all over by the wild Indians with black gunpowder; this gave way to a wiser report, in which it was proved that the Persians had flayed him alive; while others, still *more wise*, declared that it was beyond any doubt that the Turks had used him the worst of all; and every woman who was old enough to remember him, and every one who was young enough to listen, declared it was monstrous shameful, and pitiful, and wonderful, and they would walk on their bare feet to see him, that they would.)

Accordingly, the next morning, the whole country, as if moved by one universal instinct, crowded to Sedgewood Park—the nobility and gentry came in their coaches to welcome the general—the old and affectionate tenantry crowded to see the son of their good landlord—the poor to hail their future benefactor—ladies of his own standing, to see if he were half as handsome as he used to be—and young ladies, to see if he still could look like a lover—all the military in the neighbourhood pressed to see a brave man—the virtuous to show how they esteemed a good man—ancient families claimed affinity with him—modern ones approached him to show how glad they would be to claim it—and the great mob pressed to see something they had never seen before.

When all this was subsided, and the first flow of feeling was gone by, Sir Theodore then said—"My dear The, you have never told us where you have been, nor whence you came, during all this time that we have been led to believe you consigned to an undistinguished grave, though a very honourable one."

"At the time it was concluded, very naturally, by my countrymen, that I fell in the general slaughter, which, notwithstanding our victory, was that day very great. In the heat of the action, I had been led to pursue the enemy, in one particular, beyond the field of battle; and having encountered two men, had the misfortune to have my horse killed under me, so suddenly, that I fell with the poor animal, in such a manner as to have my thigh broke by the fall; I had received a severe wound, between my neck and shoulder, during the early part of the engagement, from the stroke of a scimitar; and the loss of blood, together with the pain of the broken bone, and the utter inability

of extricating myself from my situation, made me altogether helpless; and feeling what I believed was the shades of death gathering round me, I resigned myself to my fate, and lay a considerable time in a deep swoon, at least so I imagine, as it was break of day when I became sensible of life, and found myself in the arms of some Hindoo women, who were bearing me on a sort of hurdle towards a tent at some distance.

“I found that the sword which I grasped in my fall, and whose diamond hilt was remarkably fine, had attracted the attention of these women, and they were induced to remove me for the purpose of stripping me; when, however, they found me alive, their avarice gave place to their humanity; they stanchd my wound, laid me on a comfortable pallet, and attended me with the utmost care; the fracture in my thigh being what is termed a simple one, set itself, and has subjected me to a very trifling defect only. The husbands of the women whose humanity saved me, were in the service of the enemy; and an armistice being now concluded, they unhappily returned home before I had been able to prevail on their wives to convey a letter for me to the British camp; and from the moment of their arrival, I was treated with all the severity of a prisoner; and, notwithstanding my weakness, heavy shackles were imposed on my hands and legs, my food abridged, my clothes taken from me, and my kind nurses even chastised in my presence for the pity they had shown me.”

As the general pronounced these words, he saw a deadly paleness overspread the face of Lady Caroline, and his sister wept aloud; yet each looked to him with an air of eager curiosity, that sought the gratification it dreaded.—The feeling narrator did not appear to notice this; but his heart had taken the alarm, and repressing any further account of sufferings which would shock them, he continued thus:—

“It would only recall scenes I wish for ever to forget, if I were to relate the various attempts I made to bribe, or to soften my keepers, or the many useless attempts by which I sought to regain my freedom, and which only riveted those chains which were the more insupportable, because I was not a prisoner of war, with the hopes of an exchange before my eyes, but merely the slave of capricious robbers, who were unauthorized by their own govern-

ment to detain me, and who, after persisting in their conduct for some time, now dared not to restore me, lest they should be obliged also to restore the property they had taken from me; and I am convinced would have murdered me, if they had not been prevented by the women, whose power however could not go to liberating me: at length they delivered me over to a distant tribe, by whom I was conveyed, still in shackles, through a track of country never perhaps penetrated by any European before, and at the end of our journey, sold by them to a horde of Tartars, who bought me under the pretext of using me as an interpreter, but, in fact, to learn of me the art of British warfare; with this barbarous race I traversed the immense territory between the Indus and Siberia, between eight and nine years; every hour I was awake meditating on the means of escape, and thus preserving my mind from that utter despair, which the severity of my fate might otherwise have induced; conscious that the All-seeing eye was still upon me, and that he 'who suffered not a sparrow to fall to the ground unnoticed,' could trace my wanderings, and heal my sorrows.

"I was at length removed from this situation, by the engagement of our little troop with a band of Russian soldiers, who took us prisoners; but coldly butchered all they had spared from the field, except myself, who, being an European, they considered might become useful to them; and hope once more sprang to my heart, from the present release I had obtained. During our journey to the garrison-town from whence these troops had been scouring the country, I was treated with some degree of kindness; and having no doubt but that if I could get to any large town, I should meet with relief from some English merchant, I almost fancied the days of captivity were at an end; but I was miserably disappointed, for on our arrival at the garrison, I was thrust, without crime on my part, or accusation on theirs, into a miserable prison, where the cold of the climate, and the dampness of the walls, threw me into that state of rheumatic suffering, from which I suffered so severely in England, and which, under the total want of every comfort, must soon have finished my miserable existence, if once more female pity had not been deputed by Heaven to relieve me."

At this moment it might be observed, that the rose displaced the lily in the cheek of Lady Caroline, and that she seemed to be rather upon the fidgets; but the general appearing to notice this emotion as little as the other, though his heart was equally flattered by both, thus proceeded in his relation :

“ The wife of the captain who had succeeded in destroying the troop of Tartars to which I had belonged, accompanied him; she had a child of great beauty and intelligence; and as I am very fond of children, I had attached myself much to him, especially by making him little toys of grass and bulrushes, woven in the manner I had seen practised by the Hindoo women: when I was put under confinement, the child found a great loss, and importuned his mother to let him visit me, to which she consented; but it was many days before the captain, her husband, gave himself the trouble to inquire where his people had bestowed me, for his character was that of mingled indolence and ferocity, but too common with men of his class in the frigid zones, and whose souls appear to be composed of the fumes of tobacco and brandy, each acting by turns. When, at length, the little boy got to my wretched dungeon, and perceived that I could neither hold out my arms to embrace him, nor even use my fingers for his amusement, he became exceedingly distressed; and on his return to his mother, gave her an account which awoke all her compassion; she procured my enlargement, and every thing which could conduce to my comfort; and from the use of the Russian bagnios, I was restored to my limbs; but my great distance from the capital still laid me under many difficulties; and the state of warfare in which the country was engaged, subjected me to all the vicissitudes of suffering. At length I had the good fortune to rescue my benefactress and her child from a state of such imminent danger, that gratitude for their lives induced the captain to take some active means for my benefit; and, under his guidance, I was forwarded to Riga, from which place I worked my passage to Elsinore, where an English merchant took compassion on me, believed my story, and paid for my passage to Scarborough, and would have equipped me with clothes from his own wardrobe, if time had permitted; I had so small a quantity of English coin about me, that when I set foot on my native shore, I found it impossible to pay for any car-

veyance, after satisfying the inn-keeper for my first refreshment, and my impatience would not brook delay; I therefore set out on foot, and walked many miles without being sensible of fatigue, for my mind was too much agitated to attend to the wants of my body, till they became nearly insupportable; and at that very juncture, a kind countryman offered me a welcome seat in his vehicle—you know the rest, my dear sir.”

“Ah, my dear Thé!” said the old gentleman, “you have told a long tale of suffering in a little compass; your wanderings would have filled volumes, my son; but I trust they are all at an end, and will now serve to amuse the memory they have once afflicted.”

“But there is *one* wandering, thank Heaven,” said the general, “I have never known—my heart, *dearest* Caroline, has been ever stationary—in the lowest depths of misery, it has sought solace from the thoughts of your love, and in the dayspring of hope, you have given the brightest beam—I have reposed on your faith—I have triumphed in your affection; and Heaven, in sparing you to my prayers, grants me an earnest of happiness, cheaply purchased by the sufferings of more than twenty years of misery.”

The sweet tears of reciprocal delight, which trembled in the blue eyes of lady Caroline, told the enraptured Theodore how fondly she answered his affection, and how truly every emotion of her heart had re-echoed his own.

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## CHAP. II.

Enamour'd more, as more remembrance swells  
With many a proof of recollected love,  
Their evening comes at last serene and mild. THOMSON.

SAYS she to her neighbour, “What will this antiquated pair of lovers do? live on sentiment and platonism for the rest of their lives, which, to be sure, is all they *can* do, poor things; or will they be such fools as to marry at last?—Let me see, twenty-six, and seven, and eleven, and then the three years he was in Italy—bless my life! why the general is almost fifty years old; and the lady will be en-



tering her fortieth year when her birth-day comes; pretty lovers, truly! and to have such fine names too, Caroline and Theodore, applied to such poor old battered souls—was any thing ever so truly ridiculous?”

Not battered *souls*, Mrs. Sneerwell, only battered *bodies*, when you have made the worst of it; for though their souls had indeed suffered many a year of sorrow, yet *love* was there, and, let me tell you, Love makes a perpetual spring.

“I can't comprehend you, sir.”

That I can readily believe, for when we are too busy in scanning the many failings in human nature, we lose the power of discerning its many excellencies, for such, undoubtedly, the all-wise Creator still permits to inhabit there: man, with all his faults, “though sullied and dishonoured, still divine,” proves in various ways his power of overcoming the evils of life by the superiority of his nature: and now the days of this long ordeal were past, the amiable couple before us found in themselves the power to enjoy the mild evening of life, with tempered hopes and moderated joys, not less sweet, because less vivid, than the days of yore. The long trial of constancy each had endured had perfected esteem; and suffering each for the other had but confirmed their love, since we are all apt to like that the best which costs us the most. Those are very much mistaken who fancy that all his sufferings had made the general unlovely in the eyes of Caroline; as to the lady, though pale and thin, she is at so fashionable an age, that it would be folly to insist on her powers to charm; 'tis true, for a single woman, she is many years too old; but for a married one, she is precisely the thing for our times, at least, if not for her own.

The first care of Sir Theodore, however, was to forward this business with all convenient speed, by renouncing his title and estates in favour of his son; it was necessary, too, that the recovered general should pay his duty to his young sovereign, where he was most graciously received, and where it was hinted to him, by the great man of that day, that he might, if he pleased, be permitted to enjoy the honours, as well as estates, of the earl of Brooksbury, on his marriage with the heiress; but as it so happened that the general had a very great predilection for his own name, and no very great veneration for the name of Brooksbury, and

was moreover not over partial to Lord Bute, he declined the offer altogether, well knowing that his gentle Caroline had no ambition beyond that of blessing him.

As, however, this couple were not precisely in the same hurry to be married as those are who run to Gretna Green, it was near autumn's fall before the wedding took place, which, at the earnest request of the *ci-devant* Sir Theodore, took place in Fairborough church, to which Lady Caroline did not object, though she was an old maid, and lived at a time when ladies were not subject to ceding their rights *before* marriage, because they were thoroughly informed on the necessity of obeying their lawful lords for ever after; she had, however, so much of the decorum of that day in her conduct, as to take care not to arrive at Mr. Sedgewood's house till the evening preceding her marriage, and to be accompanied by Lord and Lady Egerton, successors to the worthy couple we have so often mentioned, and Miss Littleton, the present Lady Egerton's sister.

The present residence of Mr. Sedgewood and his daughter, was a neat house, which had been, for nearly a century past, the residence of the second son, or the widows of the Sedgewood family; from it the present inhabitant had removed on the demise of his brother, whose widow had occupied it, until within about two years, when her death had left it uninhabited. The pleasure with which Mr. Sedgewood returned to it, afforded a striking contrast to his feelings when he quitted it, for he was then hopeless of seeing his son; he was entering on the cares of a large establishment, and the conscientious disposal of a large income, at a period of life, and in a frame of mind unwilling to cope with the burthen; and unable to discharge its claims, he now retired to the first scene of his happiness, and awaited his final summons to rejoin the fair spirits, that had illumined the morning of life, with piety and peace.

To this place the general had ever been fondly attached; and as he silently paced the velvet lawn before the house, and darted an eye of tender solicitude through the long avenue, down which the carriages must pass, he felt thankful that, after all his wanderings, he should be led through so many dangers, to receive happiness, not only in his own land, but on the very spot where he had birth, surrounded by the dearest of his surviving friends, and bless-

ed with a sense of renovated health, and vigour of mind, seldom found after so long a season of affliction—"Surely," said he, "this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes." A sense of divine goodness is not only the surest consolation in affliction, but it gives the purest zest to pleasure. The general was now walking slowly up the avenue, pondering on the providential goodness which had led him to this happy hour, when, through the stillness of the night, he heard the carriages he so anxiously expected, roll rapidly over the bridge at Fairborough, which bespoke them within a mile of him; and in a moment after, the sweet bells of its church broke on his ear in joyful acclamation; the general dropped on his knees, and looking up to Heaven in silent rapture, glorified God for having permitted him to live to that hour; all remembrance of the past was lost in future hope, and present enjoyment; and in the sense of mercy and gratitude, the pangs of memory were obliterated.

As Theodore rose from his knees, he perceived the moon in full-glory, shining over his head; he stepped from the shadow of the trees to observe her more fully, and perceived she was somewhat in the wane; but her light was brilliant, and her path without a cloud; he thought on the prophecy of poor John, when, twenty years before, her gentle rays had illuminated the darkest night of horror he had ever known, and he remembered then saying, with a sigh, "She is in the wane." At this moment, the first carriage bowled forward o'er the green path; he flew to the door; he felt the hand of his beloved fondly tremble in his own; and the tender delight which throbbed in his heart re-echoed, "Though life may be in its wane, yet love like ours is yet in its meridian."

You may think what you please, ladies; but if you do not admire my grandfather, you may be very dashing, very knowing, very quizzing, nay, even very sentimental, very lackadaisical, very romantic and novelistic, but depend upon it, with all this, you know nothing of love, as a sublime and virtuous emotion, an ennobling and endearing principle, nor will you ever be able to comprehend the innumerable beauties in the song of Darby and Joan, for which I am extremely sorry, for I heartily wish every young lady of my acquaintance to understand it, and every married lady to experience it.

"Lord, what a bore the man is with his prosiſg!"—My dear madam, I have very nearly finiſhed both the chapter and the history, and have given you as small a quantity of digression and animadversion, as any new author can possibly be expected to do. I consider my conduct, in this respect, as particularly amiable, because it enables you to lay me down at the end of the first story without taking me up again; and though I flatter myself, of course, that this will not be the case, yet I consider it an act of liberality on my part; and as I set out with telling you that I must give the history of my family, as well as my own, you cannot say I have deceived you, in thus venturing to bring before you a man whose "like you will not often look upon," though he did not marry till he was forty-nine years and six months old; but as he is now drawing on his high-topped white gloves to go to church, let us finish the chapter, by attending him there; 'twill, at least, be a novelty, you know, my dear ma'am, to see a country wedding fifty years ago, though very different from the admirable Sir Charles Grandison's with the beautiful Miss Byron.

The bride was drest, without hoop, in a white satin night-gown, which was made open at the shoulders, and fastened at the chest by a diamond broach, and her waist was encircled by a girdle, enriched by the same valuable stones, smaller wreaths of which looped up her sleeves a little above the elbows, thereby displaying the inimitable symmetry of her hand and arm; over her neck was thrown a capuchin of the purest ermine, and on her head she wore a hood and lappets of the finest point, ornamented with a diamond crescent. She was supported by Miss Sedgewood, who wore a purple velvet robe, embroidered in rich silver points round the bosom, a silver girdle to correspond, a cap of the same, with a rich bouquet of pearls in the front, and a white satin mantle; and whatever the Misses of the present day may think, it is on record in Fairborough, that the bride looked like an angel, and the bridesmaid like a queen; the other ladies were robed in white tissues, trimmed with sable; and the bridegroom appeared in a suit of dress regimentals, with a hat ornamented by a diamond loop, and a plume of milk-white feathers. His venerable father exerted himself to act as one to the bride; and it is not uncharitable to say, he was the only father she had ever known; "not less enraptured than the happy pair," his eyes swam

with tears; and his fervent benediction bespoke the ardent sensibility which was yet unchilled, though eighty winters had shed their snows upon his brow, and many sorrows pressed heavy on his heart; but they had been sorrows soothed by religion, and endured with patience, unallied to those tempestuous passions which most effectually rend the heart, and destroy the constitution of man.

On returning from the sacred ceremony, the party met at the park many of the surrounding gentlemen and their families; but scarcely had they welcomed the friends they expected, when Sir Theodore was delightfully surprised to find himself abruptly seized by a lusty hale-looking elderly gentleman, who announced himself as an old friend; and presenting his lady, and two fine young women, her daughters, demanded to be recognised as Sir Thomas Frankland.

The unfeigned joy this accession to the party diffused through it, was both felt and expressed very warmly; the baronet pretended great offence at not being instantly known, saying, a few years couldn't make much difference in an honest fellow, who had lived at his own seat, loved his own wife, ate his own mutton, and drank his own claret, though it might make a good deal in an outlandish runaway, who had been baked under the torrid zone, withered under the frigid zone, and crept home again without blood in his veins, or marrow in his bones. How long the baronet would have continued his raillery, I know not, for the bridegroom, who had literally so picked up his crumbs as to look handsome enough to bear joking on very freely, at this moment singled out an object in the park from the many hundreds who were making merry there, and interrupting Sir Thomas with a slight apology, he flew out of the house, and addressing the person in question, said—"Pray, friend, have you any recollection of me?"

"Yees, sir, its loiké I have.—no offence, I hope; but yeer face is the same face I saw three months back under an old cap; but, thank God, its a little plumper, and not quite so broon, I think."

"My honest friend, I have, since then, been from home, or I should have sought for you; but as you must undoubtedly have heard who the person was to whom you had been so serviceable, I am surprised to find you never called at this house, where my father would have been happy to

have received you, more especially as I told you to keep the coin I gave you, till you returned it to me."

"Why, sir," said the man, "I did hear, to be sure, that your honner was commed back in a queer kind of a way like, and my mind misgived me whether you mightn't be the very man I had geen a lift to; but I made a journey toth sooth soon after, an I was tuke with a fever an confined a long time, as your honner may see; an when I got back hoame, things had gon very badly, an I've had a deal to du to bring 'em boot again, or else, I cannot but say I long'd i' my hart to satisfy mysel, specially because I hard your honner's sarvants had quired a many times why I wasn't on the road as usual; soa, thinks I, to-day's my time; I can have a chance as well as other foak, and mayhap I may see whether his honner's woife be she that looked so white like when she stopped me to talk about him on the road; an sure enuff it was, for I got a glig of her through yon window at the varry time your honner spied me—no offence, I hope?"

"I am not offended; but I am hurt that I was not acquainted with your illness; I have been to blame, not in forgetting you, but in allowing myself to defer the time of seeing you: give me my shilling in exchange for this purse, and inform me to-morrow in what way I can serve you better."

The man took the heavy purse with a lively expression of gratitude in his eyes, yet a reluctancy in his hand; but as he pulled the coin out of his pocket, he returned, with an air of sorrow, the pledge of recognition, saying—"To be sure, sir, I be gon down in the world since I took that, and I have a woife and two bairns; it therefore comes very welcome just now; but I hopes your honner doesn't think I wants to be pead for a bit of a koind turn to my fellow creatures?"

"No, my good fellow; on the contrary, I perceive that your mind is only too generous, and your spirit too independent for your situation in life: I see you have a liking for this little coin, so I beg you will keep it as a proof of my regard for you; the money you shall carry to your wife; but this queer shilling, as you called it, must be the boud of friendship between you and me, and remind us both of the circumstances under which we met."

The man replied only by a silent tear, and an eye-beaming with gratitude and pride; so true it is, that minds are sometimes cast in a mould by Nature herself, capable of the finest sensibilities. Sir Theodore determined that the first act of his new station in life should be to place this man in that humble independence he was so well calculated to adorn.

The severity of the following winter was observed to have a decided effect on the frame of the good old gentleman; and, on that account, Sir Theodore did not remain long in the metropolis, a circumstance desirable to his lady, because she wished much to be near Miss Sedgewood, and did not find that the charms of a "Winter in London" repaid her for the loss of that society which had been so dear to her in the country. It was however necessary to stop some days at her own seat in Staffordshire, where their presence was the signal for joy and admiration; they returned to Sedgewood Park in April, and the appearance of Lady Caroline indicated the probability of her remaining there some time. Mr. Sedgewood was now become weak and languid in the extreme; but his mind and his heart survived the infirmities of his body; and in the prospect of seeing his son a father, he appeared to enjoy the only remaining good Heaven could bestow; but this very emotion probably hastened his departure, as he only survived the return of his beloved son three weeks, when he gently sunk into the sleep of death, in the arms of that affectionate daughter, who had been to him a supporting angel, and who fondly clung to him, with increasing affection and vigilance, to the last moments of his existence, and wept over his venerable remains with a tenderness but seldom equalled.

The birth of a daughter first led Miss Sedgewood to the park, and taught her to partake the bliss of the happy parents; this was, however, a pleasure not purchased without alloy, for the health of Lady Caroline was long so extremely delicate, that her anxious husband might be indeed said to "rejoice with trembling," and there were times when solicitude arose to agony; and when he found in these awakened fears that truth he had once anticipated, "how much the wife is dearer than the bride;" she was again about to become a mother; and her health appeared so inadequate to the trial that awaited her, that his heart sunk within him

at the prospect before him. He was past the age when hope arrays expectation in the colour of our wishes, and paints the future as lovely as it is too often deceitful; and the depression of his spirits was such as almost to make the evil it feared. But the mind of Lady Caroline was as firm as her manners were gentle; she saw the trembling anxiety of her bosom's lord, and she called all the powers of religious fortitude and pious resignation to her aid, neglecting no means of fortifying her health and spirits, and, by indulging her own hopes, awakening those of her idolized partner: this conduct, the result of enlightened faith and native energy, excited by cheerful piety, was blest in the issue. Lady Caroline presented the enraptured father with a lovely boy, who was the harbinger of health, and all the delightful occupations of maternal love to his mother, who, after his birth, recovered, in some measure, the bloom of youth, increased in her size, without losing the gracefulness of her figure, and was allowed to become a handsomer woman than she had been for several years.

Doctor Johnson has observed, with great truth, that young couples are fondest of each other—old ones of their children; this couple might be truly said to enjoy and to communicate both these species of affection, in a very uncommon degree, so that it was not possible, without going to a direct breach of truth in all its parts, for “her to say one thing to her neighbour,” which indicated the slightest deficiency in their connubial bliss; the manly affection, the dignified tenderness of Sir Theodore, were only equalled by the noble submission, the confiding love, the unobtrusive fondness of his Caroline; and even the doating admiration each evinced towards their lovely and promising offspring, never made them, for a moment, forget the still superior claims which each had on the other. Sorrow and time, those awful monitors of the human heart, had so corrected those little absurdities, or trifling petulancies, which even the best concocted natures will at times display in the morning of life, that a perpetual stream of peace and gladness solaced their evening hours, never disturbed but by the trifling irregularities of infantine error, whose “tear, forgot as soon as shed,” served only to inform them there was a state of bliss, even more perfect than that which they enjoyed.



As a tribute of respect for the beloved memory of Lord Frederick Ingleby, the heir of Sir Theodore Sedgewood received his name. When this boy was about six years old, the peace of this happy circle was disturbed by the evident decline in the health of Miss Sedgewood, who was recommended to try a warmer climate; and as she was now at that period of life when her father had experienced much benefit from the air of Nice, she was induced to try it.—The baronet kindly accompanied her across the water; and soon after his return, had the satisfaction of hearing that she was comfortably settled, and had even the pleasure of renewing some of her early connexions; but he observed, with pain, that this journey had renewed also those painful remembrances of the departed, whose effect he knew but too well how to appreciate; and he could scarcely help lamenting, that the constancy, which was a peculiar and characteristic virtue in the Sedgewood family, should have so often been accompanied by sorrow. From this sympathy in his sister's feelings, he was happily withdrawn, by the cares incident to him as a father, whose delightful task was now every day pressed upon him, by the opening talents and graces of his blooming offspring.

Adieu, my dear madam; if you are inclined to meet me again, I flatter myself, that in tracing the history of Frederick Sedgewood, though much less singular than his father's, you will not be displeased, though you should find the character of the man, rather than his adventures, the theme of my next story. It is with the heart and the conduct you and I have the most to do, madam; for we can love the one, and imitate the other; whereas—

“If they deserve estimation, sir.”

*Estimation*, madam! he was the most noble, amiable, simple, enlightened, and exalted of human beings—you will excuse my warmth; he was my *father*, madam; and if you do not *love him*, by the love-like beam of my grandmother's blue eyes, though you may be as young as Hebe, and as beautiful as Venus, I could love my aunt Barbara's knitting needles better than you.

*indeed*

## CHAP. III.

“Love is that drop Heaven in our cup has thrown,  
To make the nauseous draught of life go down.”

CAROLINE and Frederick Sedgewood were both brought up by their parents, who, being elderly people, had nothing better to amuse themselves with; and though “she often said to her neighbour, the poor children must inevitably be spoiled, that the girl could not fail to be a dowdy, and the boy a milksop, yet, in spite of these prognostications, it so happened, that although Caroline blushed sometimes, “when wounded at the deep regard she drew,” yet she was never awkward, that her person was elegant, her manners unconstrained, though timid, and her beauty blended the happy vivacity of her aunt’s features, with the placid dignity of her mother’s; while her mind, without perhaps the strength of either, was endowed with all most prepossessing in each. Frederick, so far from being a milksop, fit to be tied to his mother’s apron strings, was active, high-spirited, and courageous in his pursuits, gentle and conciliating in his manners, possessing an ardent, yet penetrating mind, an acute comprehension, and solid judgment, strong passions, but controlling reason; the information of man, and the ingenuous simplicity of youth, were in him singularly combined; since it can rarely happen that the whole powers of such a mind as Sir Theodore’s can be applied to the sole purpose of educating a son, however desirous he may be of undertaking the task; since at no other period of his life could he, with propriety, have withdrawn from the activity of public avocations demanded by his situation. It has ever been observed, that the tenderness evinced by grandsires towards their second offspring, proves more indulgent than was shown to their own children, and is generally deemed injurious, as it often clashes with the authority of the parent. In my father’s case, this species of indulgence was naturally experienced, as his father was of the age a grandfather, in the common course of events, would have been; but his mode of exciting the confidence of his child interposed with no other authority; he was therefore never suspected of yielding to

weakness instead of reason, the common accusation of grandfathers, a suspicion he could not indulge from the conduct of any person about him, since he found such a universal deference paid to the talents of his father, whose travels, and various situations in life, had combined with nature to give him a marked superiority, that he never looked upon his instructor and guide as an *old* man, further than to increase his love and veneration for him.

A pleasant intercourse had ever been kept up between this family and that of Sir Thomas Frankland, whose daughters were both married in England; and when Caroline Sedgewood was about seventeen, the eldest of these ladies, now the honourable Mrs. Walsingham, pressed her parents so much, and so kindly, to permit her to spend a few months, under her care, in London, that they were at length induced to consent, though they felt it to be the separation which might probably be only the prelude to one of a longer date; yet, as their daughter must go into the world some time, and could not enter it under the auspices of a more amiable and respectable woman, who united the virtues of the matronly character with the vivacity of a fashionable one, they considered it a duty they owed to their child, to permit her the enjoyments suitable to her age and rank; and to this plan they conceded the more readily, because their much-loved sister had announced her intention of returning once more to her native country, and proposed meeting her niece at the house of their mutual friend in London; so that Caroline was thus likely to experience the benefits of a double guardianship on this momentous occasion; and under even this protection, the heart of the tender mother palpitated with anxiety, on the prospect of sending her into that world of which she had herself seen little comparatively, yet from which she had suffered much.

Frederick undertook to escort his sister to Grantham, at which place, Mr. and Mrs. Walsingham kindly gave their blooming guest the meeting. Caroline had parted from her parents with all the sensibility of a young and tender heart; but expectation of pleasure, the amusement which variety never fails to inspire, and the kind attentions of her brother, had succeeded in dissipating her sorrows; and she met her friends with a face so glowing with youth, beauty, and innocence, as to excite their warmest admira-

tion ; but when she parted from the dear companion of her childish sports, the brother to whom every thought and feeling of her heart had been imparted, she felt the severest pain ; and the lovely relatives were torn from each other, dissolved in temporary sorrow.

Plays, operas, balls, routs, and lovers, soon succeeded to their usual influence on the lively Caroline ; and every letter received for some time by the delighted parents, evinced the pleasure she enjoyed, without deducing from the sweet simplicity of her character. At length she spoke of the arrival of her aunt, for whom she confessed she had not hitherto felt the predilection she ought, having understood that her aunt, Mrs. Barbara Sedgewood, was an old maid, and that all old maids were very cross people ; on the contrary, her aunt appeared quite as good natured as her mother, which was, she understood, caused by living so long in France, which must be a charming place, since it made old women as agreeable as young ones.

The heart of this good aunt was not long without experiencing some of those fears for her niece, which, though very slightly expressed, tended a little to revive her prejudices, and therefore prevent that unbounded confidence, which, to a heart so ingenuous and unguarded as Caroline's, might have been invaluable. A new visitant had lately appeared at Mr. Walsingham's, in the person of Lord Viscount Borrowdale, a near relation of that gentleman's, who was just returned from the grand tour, and who could not be said, like many of his countrymen, to have travelled for nothing, since he had added to a fine person, many of those graces which were perhaps best acquired by mixing in the society of foreign courts, (as foreign courts stood then,) and many of those vices, which native parts and industry may acquire, without visiting any court at all ; and while his manners were specious enough to deceive an older head than Caroline Sedgewood's, he was capable of vice, to which she was so utter a stranger, that to have attributed it to any human being, would have appeared to her an atrocious falsehood ; but to think of charging the amiable Lord Borrowdale with it, would have been, in her eyes, sacrilege at least.

Two young men of rank, both amiable and worthy, though of different descriptions, had sought the favour of this lovely girl ; but, at her entreaties, had discontinued

their addresses, without engaging her father in their behalf: the latter of these had been known to the viscount abroad, and had enjoyed a preference in the eyes of a certain lady, which, though unsought for by him, had nevertheless excited the pique of Lord Borrowdale, who could not readily forgive even an act of unintentional rivalry. The beauty of Caroline first drew the viscount's attention; but he considered her too mere a country girl to engage him further, until he perceived the devotion of the lover alluded to; and from this moment he determined, if possible, to supplant *him*, though without forming any positive designs as to what he should do with her, matrimony not forming any part of his system at present.

It was easily perceived by aunt Barbara, that Caroline was but too fond of the insidious Borrowdale; that he *was* insidious, and, as she feared, unworthy of her niece, she had too little doubt, from many concurrent testimonies, given by circumstances rather than persons; for Mrs. Sedgewood, as she *now* called herself, though she would not listen to what she said to her neighbour, yet felt it a duty closely to analyze the disposition and conduct of him to whom such a prize as the innocent and lovely Caroline must be given. She had remarked in the eye of the viscount, at some times, the haughty glance of pride, and, at others, the licentious beam of libertine effrontery; from his own conversation, she learnt that his associates in France were men considered the most profligate among the noblesse; and she could not bear to think that a jewel, so nurtured by parental tenderness, and so endowed by the partial hand of nature, should be wasted on the selfish heart of a spendthrift, miser, or a brutal voluptuary; and, without assigning her reasons, she urged the parents to recall their daughter, adding her own earnest desire of revisiting Fairborough.

*This* desire was given to Mrs. Walsingham as the reason why Caroline must visit Sedgewood Park sooner than originally had been proposed; and it did not prepossess the young lady more in favour with her aunt; and though she did not cavil at the decree, yet she was evidently hurt by it.

When Lord Borrowdale understood that Caroline was going to be removed so soon, he was somewhat surprised to find that she had really got more hold upon his heart than it was his intention any person should ever possess; but as

it was easier to put the flame out, in his opinion, by the regular course of things, than endeavour to extinguish it by reason, or philosophy, he consented to become a benedict for her sake, seeing it was impossible to compass her in any other way, guarded, as she was, by Walsingham, a man of honour, and watched by the old hyena of an aunt, whose ingenuous countenance had long since led him to suppose, that notwithstanding her long residence in France, she was extremely contracted in her opinions, and had pride enough for a peeress.

Thus precipitated into measures he was not inclined to adopt, but which were preferable to losing so lovely a creature, who was, in addition to her other charms, become extremely fashionable, the viscount preferred his suit, and was heard with that tender trepidation which proved that *one* heart, at least, was interested in the affair; the blushing girl referred him to her aunt, and the aunt referred him to her brother, the baronet.

The viscount was easier, now the affair was *en train*; and he therefore took the trouble to scrawl a half-intelligible letter to Sir Theodore, in a style so totally different to what the good man would have addressed on a similar occasion fifty years ago, that he was exceedingly puzzled what to think of it; for even a very strong understanding might be puzzled by the *nonchalance* of a lover, as lovers went, only thirty years ago; so my grandfather, according to his invariable practice, laid the letter before his wife, took his hat, and walked into the park, in somewhat of a pensive mood, feeling, for the first time in his life, that his pretty Caroline lay heavy at his heart.

My grandfather was always accustomed to cogitate, on every subject which required cogitation, in a long narrow slip of ground on one side of the park, which was screened from the road by a stone wall on one side, and a holly-hedge on the other, so high, that it required a tall person, like himself, to look over it, which he seldom did when thus musing. He had taken several turns, and had been considering some phrases in the viscount's letter, in which, by appearing *sure* of Caroline's affections, and nothing doubting of her father's grateful acquiescence, he had a little wounded the delicacy of the baronet, who, where a lady was concerned, was the most sensitive creature in existence; and he was somewhat condemning his daughter for her too

early susceptibility, when, through a partial opening in the hedge, he saw his son tripping along, the picture of youth and activity; the sight never failed to give pleasure, and the baronet stood still, inwardly exclaiming—"Why, to be sure, I do feel a little uneasiness, lest Caroline should have suffered this young sprig of nobility to think my daughter could be cheaply won; but let me be thankful that this is my only source of care, and it is probably heightened above the occasion: woman, however amiable, is weak; now there is a steady propriety in my son, far beyond his years; he will never——"

At this moment the curate of Fairborough's youngest daughter, who was scarcely Caroline's age, and had been her frequent companion, was seen crossing the road home, at a little distance from Frederick: she hesitated; but he did not go towards her path, though he wished her a good evening; so she stood still, and inquired—"If he had heard lately from his sister?"

Common politeness required that Frederick should step up to her; he did so, and answered, by saying—"Yes, you know I sent you a letter, that came enclosed in my frank, on Friday."

Betsey was always pretty; and convinced that Frederick must feel the *real* reason of her stopping to ask this question, she blushed very becomingly; and with some difficulty stammered out—"Oh yes! true, I had forgot! I have been taking the answer to Lady Caroline; but, you know, she might have sent something else."

"So she did, said Frederick, smilingly throwing his arm round Betsey's waist, "she sent you a kiss, Betsey."

"So-so, so-so," said my grandfather, absolutely reddening himself, "here's a very pretty piece of work, truly! the world is certainly turned upside down; where have my eyes been the last six months, I wonder."

The baronet returned hastily, anxious to show his new lights and new anxieties to her who was the faithful repository of his hopes and fears; they had just agreed to take no notice of this business, when Frederick entered the apartment to supper; the disembarrassed air he wore reassured his father in one sense, for he thought had his heart been engaged, he would have been too happy to have appeared at ease; and he felt the more inclination to call him an impudent puppy; and certainly the old gentleman's

eyes said as much, more than once; but Frederick was engaged in a business that claimed all his attention, and the glance of anger was darted at him unseen, and therefore unheeded.

"You have a good appetite to-night, sir," said the baronet.

"Most excellent," said Frederick; "I take every thing before me, you see, sir."

"I have indeed perceived you take more than you ought to do to-night, Frederick, and I am sorry for it."

"My dear father, you surprise me; young people, with good appetites, are naturally subject to—to——"

"To *indulge* themselves, when good things are thrown in their way; but I must be allowed to inform you, that when *reason* and *virtue* deny what Nature prompts, a wise man will renounce her lessons."

The eyes of Frederick were opened; and the glowing blushes of Betsey were transferred from her cheek to his own; the knife and fork dropped from his hand; and, unable to look up, he fixed his eyes on the table cloth, with an earnestness as great as if his existence depended on deciphering the figures in the damask.

How lovely, yet how evanescent these traits of ingenious modesty, this purer essence of virtue, known only to the bloom of opening life, and fated to expire in the withering atmosphere of that world to which the youthful possessor advances with a fearless, but delusive step!

The incidents of this evening were succeeded by events of the most interesting nature. Aunt Barbara and her lovely niece returned to the park; Frederick was sent to college; the Lord Viscount Borrowdale followed to pay his addresses in form; and as Caroline declared, with the utmost innocence and earnestness, that she loved *him*, and was convinced she could never love any *other* man, and good aunt Barbara did not assign any *strong* reasons against the match, he was admitted as a lover, and the time for the nuptials arranged, which was going quite as far as Lady Caroline could think proper on a first visit; and the marriage, it was agreed, should take place when Caroline attained the age of eighteen.

At the time when it had been expected that the marquis of Blandington would have married Mrs. Barbara Sedgewood, ten thousand pounds, as a marriage portion, had been



placed in the funds by her worthy uncle, and his will confirmed the boon; during the life of her father, it had remained an accumulating deposit for the same purpose, and he did not alter the disposition of it; for having lived to see his son married to a lady five years older than his daughter, he thought it possible that, after his death, Barbara might still change her single state; and though he was anxious to give much to his son, yet the fine fortune he received with Lady Caroline rendered it quite unnecessary to rob his daughter of her uncle's boon, whether she required it as a marriage portion or not. It had ever been the custom of the Sedgewoods to give small fortunes to their daughters, whether they could afford it or not; and, exclusive of this bequest, Mrs. Barbara Sedgewood had only five thousand pounds; so that, after the death of her father, the baronet requested her to use the interest of this sum, as, otherwise, she could not possibly live with any degree of comfort; and she had accordingly done so; but she now declared it was her express pleasure that *this* sum should be appropriated to the express use of the future Viscountess Borrowdale, reserving only to herself the right of settling it upon the bride in the way and manner she judged best, and which she gave the parties to understand, should be in such a manner as to preclude the possibility of a husband's interference, a conclusion that, in the eyes of the enamoured Caroline, destroyed all the merit of the boon; nor did the baronet approve it; but though, in general, of the most pliable nature imaginable, aunt Barbara was here inflexible, and the deeds were executed according to her will.

When the wedding took place, Frederick was present on the joyful occasion, and was much importuned by the bride to accompany her to her new habitation; but as he thought that his parents would be very lonely without him when she was gone, he declined the invitation, a circumstance that rejoiced them much, as little Betsey was gone to pay a visit to her aunt in Warwickshire, and was not likely to return during his vacation. The worthy couple were indeed sensible of a great privation in their daughter's society; but as she was nobly married, and to a man to whom she was tenderly attached, they conceived it their duty to rejoice in the establishment which deprived them of her society, and clung to each other more closely to supply the

loss ; and the alarm they had experienced on their son's account being removed, the clouds were dispersed from their bosoms, and all again was peace ; but when Frederick, after passing the long vacation at home, again returned to Oxford, when the sound of his voice, the crack of his whip, or the trampling of his horses' feet, was no longer heard, there was a calm in the house, which even declining life, and the peaceful solitude it courts, would have been glad to have exchanged for the hilarity his presence inspired.

When his return was announced, the hearts of the fond parents were so delighted, that they resolved instantly on setting out to meet him ; and the pleasure of finding them at the inn, above seventy miles from home, so delighted the affectionate youth, that perhaps he would not have pressed the hand of a beloved mistress to his lips with more fervency than he took that of his mother ; nor could the fondest ardour of youthful friendship have embraced its object with more ardour than that with which he welcomed his venerable sire.

Having gone rapidly through the first part of their journey, they were inclined to return leisurely, and enjoy the beauties which Frederick pointed out to them, and which his vivacity displayed in new colours ; but as it was impossible for them to keep pace, at all times, with their youthful conductor, he was generally left to ramble about in the evenings, to seek amusement in the town or village where they had taken up their abode for the night.

At the village of Norton, Frederick rambled out to view the fine effect of a setting sun, as it was gently declining behind the parsonage house, which he remarked as being the prettiest place, of that description, he had ever seen ; and was turning from thence through the church yard, when his attention was struck by the affecting figures two little girls presented, carrying between them a paper garland, which they were, as he supposed, going to place on the grave, or hang in the church, in honour of some deceased relative. His eye was not more quick to trace the beauties of a declining sun, illuminating a majestic landscape, than his heart to enter into the sorrows of these little mourners ; but fearful of disturbing them in this tribute of tender duty, he stood still, behind the projecting porch, till they arrived at the door, when one of them tapped gently at it, and then listened, as if to catch the sound of footsteps ; the elder

saying—"We will wait, Sally, for I know she'll come—she always tells truth, you know."

In a few moments the door was opened on the inside, and the children went in; when they had entered the body of the church, he heard the poor babes sobbing audibly; and finding the door was not shut, he followed to console them, not knowing how far the purpose might be effected by the woman who had opened the door.

Frederick stepped very light; and his ear was instantly arrested by a female voice of such tender sweetness, that he felt fearful of intruding on the presence of one whose office was evidently that of a consoling angel; from the sound of the voice, he concluded the speaker was near the communion-table; and stepping into a seat, which was high enough to conceal him, and yet in a proper direction to assist his view through the screen, he turned his eyes towards the place, at the very moment when a young and elegant female was rising from her knees; a white muslin cloak, which she wore, was thrown back, and her bonnet was laid on the pavement; her hands were clasped in the attitude of devout adoration, and her eyes were turned to Heaven; her complexion, which was exquisitely fair, was heightened by the deep sensibility displayed in her features; and the tears, which still moistened her glowing cheeks, and the last rays of light, which darted through the casement of coloured glass, and "shed a dim religious light" on surrounding objects, while they fell upon her white garments, the garland that lay at her feet, and the innocent faces of the infant suppliants, altogether presented a picture alike striking to the eye, and endearing to the heart; and Frederick gazed on the fair vision before him, as if he beheld it in a dream, and dreaded lest he should awake again to the common objects of existence; yet the manner in which this lovely and engaging being exhorted her little auditors to comfort, was so consistent with simple unaffected duty and good sense, as bespoke her at once not more alive to sublime piety, than free from enthusiasm; and Frederick recovered from the idea that he had beheld an angel, to be convinced that he was near an amiable and elegant young woman.

The beautiful stranger had hung the simple tribute of love on the place appointed, and was leading the children from the church, when another pretty girl hastily ran down.

he aisle, of an agreeable person, but a complexion so different, as to bespeak her a friend, not a sister—"My dear Emily," said she, hastily, "what can have led you here? I have been seeking you this half hour; my brother wants you sadly; but" added she, on seeing the children, "you have the best possible excuse. Go home, my good girls; I have sent some broth for your father, and an apple pie for you."

The children, dropping grateful curtseys to both the ladies, withdrew; when the first, looking wistfully after them, said—"Ah, Emily, those babes are indeed at a happy age; with them the 'tear is indeed forgot as soon as shed,' and the pious drops shed on a mother's grave cease to rend the heart when they have bedewed the cheek; but if I should be so wretched as to share their sufferings, I think my sorrows could have no end."

"But, my dear Arabella, why will you distress yourself by presages that have little foundation at present? I trust our next accounts of Mrs. Dermot's health will be better; but if they should not, I am certain your reason and religion will alike teach you not to sorrow as one without hope."

At this moment the ladies passed near the seat where Frederick, fearful of alarming them, had sat down; and he heard the former answer this appeal by a sigh so profound, that it seemed to penetrate his very soul; they passed forward to the door; and as he heard the key grate in the lock, he was forcibly struck with the necessity of breaking silence, however unwillingly; he darted forwards, exclaiming—"Ladies! ladies!" the door was difficult to lock, being too ponderous for their hands; and the voice alarmed them so much, that they both precipitately abandoned it. Frederick opened the door just as they were leaving the porch, in terror; but his appearance relieved them of part of their fears, though it overwhelmed Miss Dermot with confusion, which was so fully partaken by Frederick, that the other young lady was the only person who had the use of her tongue, and she made such a stammering apology for the oversight she had so nearly committed, that her claims to the proper use of this organ might certainly be deemed dubious.

Frederick was no churl of his services in general; and the lateness of the hour might have given him a hint to see

the ladies safe home—but it did not ; for when they turned down the path which led to the vicarage, he set out on that which led towards the little inn ; but when he arrived at the wicket which shut the consecrated ground, he turned round to watch the last glimpses of a form which he imagined could never be erased from his memory, and saw an elegant young man, in uniform, give them the meeting, and taking a hand of each, draw it under his arm, and walk away, as Frederick fancied, with the pride of gratified and triumphant love.

“ This is the *brother* she spoke of,” said Frederick, “ I suppose—Umph—pshaw !—damn him !”

“ Bless me, sir, I had no idea your father would have been so wicked.”

No more had I, ma'am, till I felt as he did ; he was wrong, dreadfully wrong, especially after the truly sublime emotions he had so lately experienced, and experienced with as much tenderness towards his fellow creatures, and as much sincerity towards his Maker, as any human being could do ; but, alas ! poor human nature is sadly subject to fits and starts, in both the good and the bad parts of its nature ; and I assure you, if it will mend the matter at all, that the wicked Frederick had no sooner damned the poor captain, than he bestowed the same compliment upon himself for having done so ; and this was the first time in his life he had ever been betrayed into expressions so ridiculously wicked ; for, as *he said*, “ what was the girl to him ?”

When Frederick returned, he was so silent and pale, that both his parents instantly inquired where he had been ? and if he was well ?

“ Quite well ; I have been walking in the church.”

“ You have not seen a ghost, I hope, my boy ?”

“ I have *not*.”

As Frederick could not talk, he went to bed ; but as he could not sleep, he got up again, paced about his chamber till the dawn ; and then fell asleep, to dream about churchyards and angels ; in which employment he was occupied, when his mother, who had been rendered uneasy from his appearance the night before, entered his room, and awakened him.

When Frederick saw the preparation for their return, his heart felt very sad ; he slipped out of the room, and, by

some inquiries, soon learnt where the children, who had lately buried their mother, lived. He entered their cottage, and found the father slowly recovering from the same fever which had been fatal to his wife; he there learnt that Miss Dermot was the daughter of the late vicar, who had been dead near ten years; that her mother was, for some reason, called the honourable Mrs. Dermot; the man did not know why, unless it was because she was extraordinary good like—"But," said he, sighing, "good as she is, she cannot 'scap suff'rin, and soa't doctor has sent her into forrin parts, where her brother lives, to see if she can get her loikes agin, for they say as how th' sun allays shines there; and may God grant he may shine good luck upon she, says every one i' this parish."

"I am surprised that her daughter did not accompany her," said Mr. Sedgewood.

"Why, sur, she wouldn't go for to take her child sitch a long ways, being az how, she thot, poor thing, she'd be far better in her own country like, with his reverence and Miss Montague; for you see the young ones be quite like sisters and brothers, being all brout up together like."

"True," said Frederick, taking out his purse.

"To be sure, people say as how, when young Montague be made a right captain, he'll marry Miss Dermot."

The purse dropped instinctively back into Frederick's pocket, though his heart made a positive remonstrance against the preponderance.

"But zumhow my heart misgives me at that'll never be; 'many's the slip 'tween the cup and the lip,' you know, sur."

"Take this, my good friend," said Frederick; "I shall come your way again in about two months, and I hope then to find you much better; so saying, he dropped the willing purse on the poor man's table, ran from the cottage, and mounting his horse, flew after the carriage, as if he had taken the wings of the wind."

During this period of his stay at the park, it was remarked that he was very much altered; really, the ladies said, these nasty universities did nothing but spoil young men; Frederick Sedgewood could neither laugh, dance, nor sing, as he used to do: the men were confident that the women were right for once, for he could neither argue,

hunt, ride, fence, nor do any thing as he used to do; and his mother observed, that he had no pleasure like that of walking for hours together in the long avenue, when the leaves were falling around him, or laying listlessly in some far distant summer house; she was certain he was unwell, though he never complained—and out of spirits, though he sometimes gave loose to a burst of affected merriment.

“I can remember being much in this way when I first knew you, Caroline,” said the baronet: “but then I was turned five-and-twenty, and was seriously in love; and Frederick is only nineteen, of course that cannot be the case with him.”

“Yet,” said Lady Caroline, with a tender smile, “I believe his mother was seriously affected with the same disorder before she was his age; and, you know, we apprehended that he was afflicted with a slight paroxysm eighteen months ago.”

The baronet became suspicious; he watched his son narrowly; and one day, when Frederick had left his usual haunt of the lonely summer house, he stole in, and actually found scraps of poetry laying all around, a symptom which, in his eyes, afforded irrefragable proof of poor Frederick’s state being almost desperate, which the perusal of his motley numbers but too soon confirmed, as they ran thus:—

“Yes, it is sweet—how sweet to lie  
Among these with’ring flowers,  
And breathe my woes in many a sigh,  
Beneath the blighted bow’rs!

“In vain may pleasure fill her bowl,  
Or weave her wreaths for me:  
More dear the pang that rends my soul,  
Since felt, dear maid, for thee.”

“Very fine, truly!” said my grandfather; “but however delightful to *you*, it is by no means sweet to your father, young man,” taking up another scrap, on which he read—

“Whate’er ambition’s chaplet flings,  
On heroes’ brows, or scepter’d kings,  
The lure of pomp, the pride of pow’r,  
Or cloister’d learnings wiser hour,

I fly—and scorn th' unfeeling train,  
Untaught to prize the tender pain :  
Untaught to feel the blissful smart,  
That softens, while it wounds the heart."

"Mighty good, indeed, master Frederick! so, then, all your hopes, honours, and talents, of which I have been so proud, and to which I have looked so fondly, are to be sacrificed to a sonnet on your mistress's eyebrow, who, perhaps, after all, is a dairy wench, or a bedmaker's daughter; but let us see what comes next in this repository of sentimental nonsense:"—

"'Twas not those eyes of starry light  
Which stole my heart away ;  
No! 'twas the soul more heavenly bright,  
That darted on my raptur'd sight,  
With beams of purer ray.

"'Twas not those lips of rosy dew  
Which woke the kindling flame ;  
No! 'twas the sigh, so sadly true,  
That from those melting pleaders flew,  
And pierc'd my trembling frame."

"So you *think*, I dare say," said the baronet; "but take my word for it, that if the eyes had been placed in an ugly face, a very good soul would have looked out at the window without being noticed; and if the mouth had been wide, and the lips shrivelled, Frederick, the sigh would not have kindled any flame in your veins of a very dangerous nature, however deep it might have been."

"The re-entrance of Frederick interrupted this soliloquy; he perceived the papers in his father's hand; and it was a difficult matter to say whether the blush on his cheek arose more from anger or shame; but it was certainly a compound feeling—he was silent.

The baronet's vexation, at an accident which he had pre-determined should not take place for some years, gave way the moment he saw any thing that evinced distress in his darling son; and throwing the papers on the table, he held out both his hands towards him, saying—"You must not be angry with me, Frederick; you and I have been so little used to have any secrets between us, that——"

"*Angry!* good God, sir! angry with you! I should hate myself if—if I were capable of——"



“Anger and love, my good fellow, are nearly akin; and if you have felt such a passion towards me, it has been excited by circumstances so little in unison with my general conduct, that it is no wonder yours was for a moment warped. But let us now understand one another; grant me your confidence, and I will give you my assistance; believe me, my son, we are both too much interested in what concerns the other, to have a divided sentiment.”

Frederick, overcome with this kindness, rushed to the open arms of his father, and confessed the weakness he could not conceal; but this confession did not therefore arise from making a virtue of necessity—no, it was the genuine confidence of affection, veneration, and gratitude.

“There is nothing to blame in all this,” said the baronet, “nor any thing decidedly to lament: you admire a lovely girl, who is, by birth, a gentlewoman; so far it is well; you apprehend she is, to a certain degree, engaged; but you are not sufficiently informed on this subject to preclude hope, for which reason you very wisely nourish despair, and by the indulgence of a passion, only blamable in its excess, are destroying your health, burying your talents, and blasting the just expectations of your mother and myself, and by that means, preparing for *yourself* a portion of self reproach, of whose bitterness you have at present, thank Heaven, no conception.”

Frederick answered by a deep sigh.

“You are sensible that you are too young to form a matrimonial connexion *immediately*, even if every other circumstance attending the affair was agreeable to your wishes.”

“Certainly, *certainly*,” said Frederick, sighing again.

“Then, my dear boy, painful as it will be to part with you, I really think the best plan for you to pursue will be to set out on your travels *immediately*, and endeavour so far to amuse your mind, as to prevent this infant flame from consuming your health, and preying on your peace; this effort is due to yourself and to me: if, on your return, the worth of this young lady still holds your affections, in such a manner as to involve your future happiness, depend upon your father’s ready concurrence with your wishes; for I am convinced that, in *such* a case, your happiness will be *indeed* bound up in hers.”

“But, in the mean time, she may become the wife of another—remember that, my dear sir.”

“There seems little probability of that, since, from your account, she is still very young; and the promotion of her admirer must take place before her marriage: it is indeed possible, that if you were to seek her affections now, the more splendid prospects your situation presents, might induce her to forego her present half-formed connexion; but surely, Frederick, that is not the preference you can wish to obtain.”

Again the blood rushed in impetuous currents to the cheek of Frederick; and he declared—“That he would not owe, to a preference so founded, even the possession of an angel; but he was convinced that the mind of Miss Dermot was incapable of stooping to accept him on such grounds.”

“Probably,” said the baronet; “but she has a mother, and may have other friends, to whom she might concede from duty and affection, and who would, doubtless, give the preference to you, whatever may be the merits of the lieutenant, or the wishes of the young lady. Believe me, Frederick, a heart so warm, and a mind so delicate as yours, must be satisfied that the woman who is bound to you for life, feels for you a sentiment of such decided preference, as to leave no shadow of a doubt upon your mind as to the motives which made her yours; think on *this*, my son, not with the impassioned fondness of a boy, but the reflection of a man, on the most serious occasion which can possibly claim his attention; and consider, too, what may be the feelings of the young man whom you are anxious to supplant, and how far they ought to be objects of your consideration; let not that passion, which ought to purify the heart where it resides, implant a spirit of selfishness, which never took place in yours; and whatever may be your future destiny, preserve the proud and consoling reflection, that you are not unworthy of the amiable being to which your heart aspires; for that sensation alone is invaluable; it preserved your father through ages of sorrow; and I trust, my son, it may give a zest to your enjoyment through years of happiness.”

There was a spring in Frederick's heart, of even more than love, towards his venerable parent on hearing him thus allude to the merits of the lovely being of whom he knew

so little, and yet so much, as it convinced him that his good mentor was truly struck with the excellence of a heart, which a few minutes had revealed more fully than years of common acquaintance might have done: he perfectly accorded with the propriety of all his father advanced; and though his heart would tremble for its future hopes, it ceased to ache with that languishment which had of late depressed it; and they both returned to Lady Caroline, so like what they had ever been till lately, that she met them with the tear of pleasure beaming in her maternal eye, and which was soon dropped, on the little history of past feelings related by her son.

A very worthy man was soon engaged as tutor for Frederick; and in the bustle of preparation, the sorrow of parting was silenced, though not forgotten: when the fond parents looked upon *him*, and remembered their *own* age, and the shocks their constitutions had received in early life, they scarcely dared to make the sacrifice to which they had led him; and there were moments when each fondly longed to press him in their arms, and beseech him to stay, and close those eyes in peace, which felt as if they should sicken at the light when he had departed.

An author,\* well read in the human heart, has said—  
 “We can prescribe bounds for our own aggrandizement; but where is the parent that is not ambitious for his child?”  
 Sir Theodore had long set his mind on seeing his son fill that seat in parliament, held by his ancestors for many generations; but which his own infirmities had induced him to resign, and which had since been less worthily occupied. To this point he had long looked; and as he could not bear that a son, whom he considered, and with great justice, superior to any young man of his acquaintance, should not possess every possible advantage, he had long made up his mind to parting with him, for such a time, as would enable him to make the accustomed tour; and as his love affair seemed to render a temporary absence of still more importance, he struggled with himself to obtain the composure and courage requisite for the trial, and communicate it to his tender partner. They had both indulged in the fair dreams natural to minds so prepossessed, and had hoped to see their son united to some woman of family, and fortune

\* Genlis.

equal, or superior to his own; but at the same time had determined never so to control his inclination on that subject, as either to involve his own feelings, or theirs, in the sorrow arising from such contention, must necessarily occasion to them both; but their reason, and even their affection, forced them to delay; and while they sympathized with the feelings of their son, they could not think the manner in which he was placed a subject of real regret; for they had already found that their dear Caroline had been married too soon, even to the man she fondly loved; and that neither the splendour of her alliance, nor even her tender attachment, had power to ensure her the happiness she merited. The viscount, no longer gratified by the admiration she excited in public, and possessing no taste for the simple elegance, and unobtruding virtues of her society in private, had already found, in the amusements of the turf and the gaming table, pleasures more suited to his vitiated palate; and the heart-wounded parents, though but acquainted with a small portion of his errors, already had learnt, with sorrow, that their daughter's fortune was appropriated to expenses of such a destructive nature, as to show that aunt Barbara had proved herself the only judge in the family, when she threw the strong fetters of the law over the fortune she had so nobly bestowed upon her niece.

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CHAP IV.

I drag at each remove a lengthening chain.

GOLDSMITH.

THE sudden departure of Frederick alarmed all the town of Fairborough. Says she to her neighbour—"Poor Mr. Sedgewood is going off in a consumption, and they are getting him into a warmer climate as soon as possible; or else he is in love with some improper person, and they are sending him out of the way; I should not wonder if it was with some haberdasher's daughter at Oxford."

"Take my word for it, 'tis Betsey Fairlove, for I know his father once caught him courting her in the park on his knees, and swearing eternal fidelity; and so she was sent

off to her aunt above a year ago; and she is coming home next week; so the matter is plain enough."

In the course of a week, it was known to every body in Fairborough that the baronet had prevented an elopement, had driven his son from his presence in disgrace, had made his will, and disinherited him. Some said he was cruel; others that he was only prudent; but all agreed as to the facts; which were incontrovertible; and although, in a very short time, the curate's pretty daughter was followed home by the handsome son of a rich Warwickshire farmer, and was made, by her good father, "bone of his bone," to the great joy of the family, and apparently of the bride, yet it was still whispered, that the whole affair was of Sir Theodore's managing, for his steward had been seen to go to his banker the very morning before the marriage, and at the very time when the curate was breakfasting with the baronet, which looked as if he had been giving the poor gentleman money; and it was known that Lady Caroline had made Betsey a present of her wedding clothes; and when the poor thing left her ladyship, though she smiled, yet it was plain she had been crying; so that altogether, there was *something* in it, though it could never be sifted rightly to the bottom.

While *she* was thus obligingly employed in finding out the weak parts of a very simple transaction, and which was too common to have engaged a less penetrative genius than that which is so supereminently bestowed on the second-sighted scandal seer, Frederick was persuading himself, that it would be a most dishonourable, not to say *cruel* thing, if he did not go so far out of his road, as just to see how the poor man was going on, to whom his visit might be a matter of importance, and who had been taught to expect it even earlier than this.

Mr. Bailey, his tutor, had no objection to the arrangement, for he loved to witness the active benevolence of youth; and though he thought a letter might have answered the purpose, yet he would not cast a damp on the ingenuous ardour of his young friend, wisely concluding, that a further intercourse with the world would do that without his interference; so they travelled to Norton together; but when arrived there, Mr. Bailey proposed taking a stroll round the village, while his young friend paid a charitable visit to the sick man, justly concluding, that, in such cases,

the left hand should, according to the divine rule, be unacquainted with the actions of the right hand, a conduct he was the more inclined to pursue, from having observed that the modesty of his pupil was invincible.

When Frederick arrived at the poor man's hut, he had the satisfaction of hearing that he was at his labour in the fields; but the little girls joyfully ran out to inform him the good gentleman was come again: during their absence, Frederick had an opportunity of observing that the appearance of the habitation was improved during his absence, a circumstance that ought to have given him pleasure; but only served to convince him that love, and not benevolence, had led his footsteps thither.

The husbandman quickly returned with his children; and joy sparkled in his eyes one moment on beholding his benefactor, which was as quickly followed by a tear. Frederick, on seeing this, forgot his own eager wishes, and asked only—"If it were in his power to relieve the distress he witnessed?"

"Noa, sir: God love you for all you *have* done for me; thanks to you and the leadies, I be set on my legs now, and I wants for nothing; but you cannot give me my wife again; and, without her, the world's of very little use to me, as it were."

"I was in hopes that time would console you for your loss, my good friend."

"Maist foaks says soa; but I can't say it does: when I was very ill, I didn't think soa much about it; and I seldom said what I felt: for, thinks I, poor Mary has 'scaped frae a troublesome world, and it's my duty to bear her loss like a man; but now, sir, that I'm strong again, and your honner has bin soa good to me, and every thing goes well, as it were, I feel perfectly lost for want o' my poor wife, to take her share o' my comforts. Oh, sir, you're a young man now; and have health, and riches, an a vast deal of pleasure and prosperity; but I'il venter to say ye niver had sitch a sweet feel at your heart, as you *will have*, when you are making the woman you love happy: for what's the use o' riches and grandeur, as one may say, but just to put it all in *her* lap, as I would ha' done wi' your honner's ginnies, an said, there, Mary, take 'em, and please thyself, my good girl!"

This simple harangue had a faithful echo in the heart of Frederick, who had a thousand questions at the end of his tongue ; but, as bereft of the power of uttering one, he observed—" I hope your children will comfort you."

" Certainly," said the man, with an air of assenting melancholy, " they are good children, and a great blessing, as one may say ; and I wish for *her*, because she tukes so much pleasure in them."

" Have you seen the ladies ? that is, I mean, has Miss Montague visited you lately ?"

" Oh yes, I sees' em baith often. Young Mr. Montague be gone to his regiment. Look, sir ; that be the old gentleman's carriage coming down the back road ; he maistly goes out on a airing at this time o' day."

" He keeps a carriage, then ?"

" Why yes, sir, in a plain kind of way now-a-days : he was once far richer ; but he was bound for a friend, and lost all his money ; so he parted with two servants, and drew in like ; and he would have sould his carridge, because for why, he wanted to promote his son ; but the young man wouldn't hear of it, say what he would."

" He is a noble fellow," said Frederick, exulting in the virtue of his rival, with generous admiration.

" Why ay, sir, he's as gen'rous as a prince ; but still he's not quite as good as he should be i' sum things, for people do say he's a little wildish like ; but when he's married and settled, we do hope he'll be good."

At this moment, Mr. Bailey was seen advancing with a hasty step, and a look of so much importance, that his young friend felt himself called on to meet him ; he therefore bade the cottager a hasty, but kind adieu, putting a guinea into the hands of each of his children, which he would have kissed, for the sake of her who had done it before him, had not the consciousness of the *true* motive prevented him, as he was now under the eye of his tutor, who, though perfectly unsuspecting of what was passing in his heart, was, in one sense, an object of conscious fear : the good man now told him, that he had been so fortunate as to meet with an old friend in the person of the vicar, whose carriage he had met in his rambles, and who had made him promise to return with *him* to tea, which was now ready ; and he therefore begged that, if the invitation was agreeable, he would not lose a moment.

The invitation was accepted, with a pleasure that was visible in the lightened eye and quickened step of the young man; but in spite of his endeavours to repress it, his heart, like that of Miss Dermot, made such an intolerable bumping, that his tongue could not speak so as to be heard; and his cheeks really blushed intolerably at the rude interruption it gave him; so that between blushing and bumping, his nerves were so discomposed, that he had actually, been many minutes in the parlour of Mr. Montague, and had received two cups of tea from the fair hands of his daughter, and an equal quantity of toast from those of her lovely companion, before the whirl in his brain had subsided, and he was capable of perceiving that the chairs stood still in the room; and that Mr. Montague, having twice asked his opinion, required an answer.

By a violent effort, Frederick so far recovered the use of his wits, as to convince his auditors that they were more within his reach than Orlando's had been; and the manner in which he had replied, induced Mr. Montague to push the conversation; but Frederick finding he had done all that was in his power, and observing an instrument in the room, eagerly escaped from politics to music, and begged the ladies to favour him. They both rose with diffidence, but that readiness to oblige, which would itself have been a charm; and performed several duets, in a style of superior excellence; afterwards, Miss Dermot sung several songs, in a voice so sweetly plaintive, and with that simple soul-subduing harmony, which speaks more to the heart than the ear, that the enraptured Frederick forgot every lesson, either his own prudence or his father's had suggested, and beheld only the angelic being who had first met his eye in the form of Piety personified, and who now realized to his heart all it had imagined of perfection.

The moment of rapture must be short, and Frederick's were cut, by Miss Montague observing—"That her brother and Arabella had been accustomed to sing duets together." Frederick was silent; the language of ecstasy died on his tongue. "Perhaps," said Miss Montague, "you will have the goodness to supply his place?"

"He had all the inclination in the world; but—but——"

"But one—No buts," said Mr. Bailey, rising, "I am



certain you *can*, and *must*, my dear sir, comply with the lady's wishes—I can answer for your power."

"*Her wishes*," said Frederick, *internally*, as he thought; but the words had escaped in a sigh, so gentle, and yet so deep, that it wafted them at once to the ears of both the lovely girls; from thence to their hearts, and at last lodged them in their cheeks, where they sat glowing like rubies, and might have told a secret little known to the wearers, if there had been any one present to read them; but no such interpreter was to be found in this artless circle; and they passed without comment. Frederick took the part assigned him, and sung till even Mr. Bailey, who loved music, was tired; and the good vicar was asleep in his chair.

All things have an end, and so had this visit; but the impression it left had no end on the heart of Frederick.

Our travellers stopped next at the house of Viscount Borrowdale, in Ficcadilly; the much-loved brother was received by the viscountess with tears of tender joy; she looked ill; but being on the eve of becoming a mother, accounted for it; and as the baronet had concealed, as far as possible, his suspicions of the viscount's character from his son, Frederick found himself more happy in this meeting, than a few hours before he had thought possible.

The viscount was so obliging as to dine at home, in compliment to his guest, whom, in the evening, he introduced to a small party, who were engaged in play at the house of a woman of quality, kindly offering to take him under his own wing, as it would be inconvenient to be fledged, now he was on the point of setting out on his travels.

Frederick thought this was very brotherly, and thanked him with the cordiality due to his kindness; but informed him, that as he should *not* play, there would be no occasion for his protection.

"Ridiculous! my dear fellow, you will be laughed at by all the company."

"Then I will, with your permission, *leave* the company."

"Who will indulge in a roar of laughter the moment your back is turned, if they do not affront you to your face."

“The first will not hurt me, and the second may cost the person who attempts it rather more than a gambler will be willing to risk,” said Frederick, in a pretty strong tone, being aware that their conversation was overheard.

The viscount would have laughed at what he called the Fairborough philosophy of nineteen; but it was more convenient to conciliate the family of his wife, and he therefore played little himself on that evening; and on the next, he willingly left the brother and sister to the enjoyment of each others society, in the house of Mrs. Walsingham.—He had better have partook it, for he came off a terrible loser; and found it necessary to strip the youth, he had affected to guard, of the sum which he apprehended the baronet had equipped him with; and he therefore invited a party to his own house, having heard Frederick declare, that as it was the *last* evening he should be in London, he would devote it to his sister, whom he would escort to the Opera.

On the return of these affectionate relatives, the viscount seized his prey, declaring that as it was in his *own* house, Frederick must join his party, or it would be considered a tacit affront, in other words, an *insult* to his visitors, who were men of the very first quality.

“But, my lord, I have no money, at least, to spare.”

“Pshaw! did I not see you change a bank note of a thousand pounds this morning?”

“True; and if you had observed further, you would have seen me enclose six hundred and fifty of it instantly, in payment of a debt I contracted yesterday.”

“Umph! you have more cunning, good brother of mine, than I gave you credit for. You were at Brookes’s yesterday, it seems, while I gave you credit for prozing with the women at Walsingham’s.”

“I was *not* at Brookes’s; nor do I ever play.”

“Some *bona roba* has found out that you were an honest Yorkshireman—ah, Frederick!”

“A woman is the *last* thing in my head, at present—that is, a woman of—of——”

“Ay, ay,” said the viscount, “so says your face; and, upon my soul, blushing becomes you so well, I could wish to blush like you, silly as it is; you will soon get rid of this *mauvaise honte*, so be easy. Come, let us try your

luck at hazard; I will humour your scruples, now I find you are poor; we will only try for your odd fifty."

"That fifty, my lord, I paid for *your* lady this morning, in the purchase of child clothes for your expected heir."

His lordship obtained his wish of looking silly, and even of blushing, much sooner than he expected; but as shame is a sensation great men cannot submit to, he affected to be angry, and inquired—"If Lady Borrowdale had been so impertinent as to borrow this money, under pretext of having none, which Frederick must be aware was false, since, unless she was damnably extravagant, the old maid's gift was sufficient to supply her personal expenses?"

"Be careful, my lord," said Frederick, "how you dare to asperse *my* sister, or any woman who is a Sedgewood: your lady did not ask me for the money: but I was unintentionally a witness of her refusing to pay the bill, assigning the *true* cause, that she had not the means: and as I had never heard one of my family pressed for money before, it was natural that I should supply a want, which, in *such* a case, became a reflection on the family, and which decidedly proves, that when wives are fond of their husbands, it is of little use how closely the cares of their relatives may tie their settlements, since Lady Borrowdale's expenses speak for themselves, unless indeed she *games in private*, in which case, I think your lordship ought to claim the interference of my father."

The tone in which these words were uttered awoke the keenest resentment in the bosom of the viscount, who saw that even the silent acquiescence of his wife could not prevent the world from viewing him in his true light, and that his selfish conduct towards *her*, and his lavish expenses towards *himself*, could not be disguised from her family, whose interference could not fail to discover his meanness, much more fully than it had hitherto appeared, and would probably awake a spirit which had hitherto lain dormant in *her*; he was therefore obliged to conceal his rancour; but he forbore to press Frederick further to play; but having a run of tolerable luck, he was enabled so far to keep his temper, as to part with him with civility, and even to accord some portion of kindness to his wife, who, on her part, was overcome with sorrow, on thus losing again the brother she so fondly loved; and so much was he affected

by her situation, that he would not set out till he had written an earnest request to his aunt, Mrs. Barbara Sedgewood, beseeching her to overlook her dislike of Lord Borrowdale, and visit his sister on the approaching occasion.

These painful circumstances, by occupying and agitating the mind of Frederick, kept him from sinking again into that state of supine languor natural to a love-sick swain, and especially to one who was placed in a state of such singular suspense, and on the eve of quitting the country without the power of ending it. It proved to him, likewise, that, overwhelming as the passion had appeared on its first attack, it was possible to be in love, without being so lost to all the duties and interests of life, as he had appeared to be; and from this consideration arose the resolution to adopt his father's advice, "to perfect his character for the sake of her he loved;" a mode of conduct which is certainly the best of all those various modifications by which this passion may be distinguished, and which renders it in some characters almost a virtue, since it is the parent of many.

The travellers pushed forward with avidity; they reached Canterbury the same evening, where they slept, and retired so early, that Frederick found himself in a bed adjoining to a room where a lively party appeared to be met, for the purpose of enjoying the evening; and as his room was only parted by a wainscot, he was effectually forbidden to sleep; he therefore suffered his thoughts to wander back two hundred miles northward of the country he was now quitting; and gave a deep sigh to the memory of those delicious hours he had passed at the vicarage, exactly a week ago that evening; and he fancied that the modest blush which mantled in the cheek of Arabella on their parting, indicated more than the adieu of a common acquaintance. As he pursued this idea, so dear to the heart of a timid lover, (and every lover must be timid who is sincere,) he was roused by the distinct exclamation of a person in the adjoining apartment—"Zounds, Montague, what are you about? how can you bet in this odd manner? depend on it, the promotion you received this morning will not warrant this—remember, Fortune is a slippery jade, and you ought not to expect too much of her."

A short and angry, though indistinct, reply was all that Frederick could hear of the answer; but his curiosity was

effectually roused to find himself so near his rival, to learn that the man to whom, though a rival, he had accorded his admiration, whose promotion he had effected, and who was at this moment indulging in a propensity, of all others, the most destructive to connubial happiness, was altogether so sudden a check to his feelings, in one sense, and so strong an impetus, in another, that it became impossible not to listen. He found that Captain Montague, on receiving the commission he had forwarded him to Hastings that morning, had come over to meet a party of his friends at Canterbury; he could learn, from the frequent hints thrown out to him by some of the party, that he was subject to this vice, which accorded with what the poor man had said of his being a "little wildish;" and Frederick observed, with sorrow, that from what he could gather, he had involved himself sufficiently to render his new rank of little use to him for some months to come; he gathered sufficient information of him to learn that he was a thoughtless, good-humoured young man, capable of great virtues, and subject to great errors, more calculated to adorn his profession, than to bless the quiet scenes of domestic life.

Though gaming was, of all others, the vice against which Frederick had determined to set his face, yet he could not resolve to leave Captain Montague in the difficulties which surrounded him, without making an effort to relieve him; for he had adopted the idea, that a man of his description would not think of marrying for some years at least; and that if he presumed only to consider himself the *brother* of Arabella, he was entitled to his regard some way; he appeared at this distance to be the only link which bound him to her; and strange as it was, he could not renounce it: he therefore left a note for the captain, enclosing him the amount of his losses, and a very gentle remonstrance on the folly of subjecting himself to the pain which a virtuous mind must feel, when it reflected on conduct it could not justify. The note was left without signature, as the letter had been, which begged his acceptance of the enlarged commission; and the captain was spared the pain of blushing before his unknown benefactor, even in idea, as he was a total stranger to the handwriting of his invisible friend.

Frederick met temptation at Paris in all her usual forms of fascination; but the impenetrable egis of love protected

him: she pursued him to Naples; but found him equally invulnerable. It is true, he did not always listen to the long political discussions of Mr. Bailey, with the *Xang-froid* of a heart unoccupied; and there were times when neither men, manners, nor governments, interested him so much "as the little spot of ground now trod" upon by the woman of his heart; but he did really give a considerable portion of his attention to those things most worthy of his care; and in Italy he found much to attract and delight him. He had too little pleasure in the dull etiquette of German courts, to remain long amongst them; but his willing footsteps loitered in Switzerland. His native energy awakened enthusiasm at Rome; and his genuine taste for the arts that embellish life, and perpetuate character, made him delighted with Florence. The history and government of Venice awakened, by turns, his admiration and regret; and his comprehensive mind, through every part of this interesting country, found food for abundant meditation, and the power of deducing from her present state, her various revolutions, and her ancient glory, those political truths which were likely to render him hereafter a blessing to his own.

After seeing whatever was most worthy of remark in Sicily, and again visiting the ancient mistress of the world, our travellers went to Leghorn, intending to take shipping from thence to Gibraltar, a place which Frederick was particularly desirous to see, as it was at this time preparing to make that gallant defence, which so soon after, under the conduct of General Elliot, became the admiration of Europe.

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 CHAP. V.
 

—————how many sit  
Beside the death-bed of their dearest friends! THOMSON.

ON the evening of their arrival at Leghorn, our travellers retired early, being much fatigued from the heat of the weather; and Frederick was still in a profound sleep, when Mr. Bailey, entering his room, awoke him, saying—"That the bells from the neighbouring churches, and a convent

near them, had given the alarm of a fire, and he thought it was their duty to assist; and he had already called their servants."

Frederick instantly rose, and following the few Italians who had allowed themselves to be disturbed, with a velocity his good tutor could not command, arrived very soon at the place, and discovered, to his great dismay, a house on fire, and few people as yet assembled, either to quell the flames, or direct the means of doing it to others. An old gentleman standing in his shirt on a balcony, was vociferating with great earnestness for some one to take charge of certain valuables which he had brought from an inner room; but though many lazaroni appeared for that purpose, he would not commit them to their care, though the flames were gaining upon him; and his terrified domestics were seen screaming as they hung from the windows, or precipitated themselves thence to the ground; the lower part of the house becoming every moment more impassable.

Disgusted with the tenacity of the miser at such a moment as this, Frederick applied himself only to save the lives of his fellow creatures; and encouraging a young woman, who was standing in the same balcony, to jump down, he received her safely in his arms: the poor girl, in a transport of gratitude, exclaimed—"May God bless you, sir!" Amazed and interested at hearing her speak his own language, he hastily inquired—"If the gentleman was English too?" and without waiting for her answer, addressed him in that language, desiring him to trust the boxes to his care, and lose no time in saving himself, by following the example of the young person who had jumped over the balcony, and was received in safety.

The gentleman hastily threw down the boxes, as the girl exclaimed—"Oh, my mistress! my dear, dear mistress! the flames are now in her room—she is lost!—she is lost!"

The manner in which she stretched out her arms towards the room, showed Frederick the spot; instantly mounting on the boxes which had been thrown from the balcony, he climbed to it; the old gentleman stood trembling, afraid to jump, when Frederick, calling to his servants, lifted him over, and placed him in their arms, then rushed into the flaming house, calling aloud in English—"That whoever was in the house might yet escape, if they would come to

the balcony ;” but the crackling of the flames, the falling of timber, and the increased noise from the assembled crowd in the street, rendered it impossible to hear any reply ; he went forward, in spite of the flames, and beheld, in an inner room, a female kneeling in the middle of a chamber, the wainscot of which was burning on every side, but raged the most at the door, which seemed to be the only entrance ; her attitude was that of decided despair ; her countenance of mournful, yet pious resignation.

There was no time for words ; it was evident that the lady in her night clothes could not pass the narrow flaming door case without being caught by the flames ; and it might be expected that every moment the roof would fall on her head. Frederick, as he ran to her, tore off his coat, wrapped it round her, seized her fast in his arms, and bore her through the bickering flames : the sudden reversion in her fate occasioned her instantly to faint ; and in this state of perfect helplessness he found it next to impossible to retrace his steps : scarcely had he left her chamber, when it fell in with a horrible crash ; and he was left standing on a slip of the building, surrounded by raging fire, and every instant expecting to be precipitated with the burning mass. With a commanding voice, he called for some persons to advance near enough to receive the lady ; and one of his own servants, with Mr. Bailey, who beheld his situation in agony, braved the surrounding danger, and came as near as possible, holding a mattress in their hands ; stooping as low as he was able, he threw the insensible fair upon the safe receptacle ; but the effort he made to do this broke off the mouldering plank on which he stood, being already half consumed, and he fell amidst the ruins of the burning building, thus apparently receiving his own death in the very moment he ensured life to her.

The hour of danger is that of energy also ; though the shoulder of Frederick was dislocated by the fall, and he was covered with bruises, and for a moment stunned by the dreadful fate which appeared to have overwhelmed him, he soon recovered sufficient recollection to perceive that life was in his power, if he could escape before another fall of the building took place ; tearing off his shirt, lest it should catch the flames, he struggled against the load of rubbish and burning embers which surrounded him, and in a few moments made his voice once more be heard ;



the sound was hailed with joy by the servant who remained, and by many others who had felt his heroism awaken the dormant spark in their own bosoms ; and they pressed to his deliverance ; so that in a short time he found himself once more breathing the pure air, and the burning building over his head exchanged for the bright canopy of heaven ; but he found himself so much injured by the wounds he had sustained, that after learning the lady was safe, he requested to be carried home immediately, and that surgical help might be procured.

When Mr. Bailey saw the terrible effects which this unhappy accident had procured for his beloved pupil, he could not help severely reproaching himself for having led him into a scene, where even the extensive good he had rendered to others scarcely seemed, to the eye of so tender a friend, to compensate for his individual sufferings. Frederick condemned the sentiment as unworthy of Mr. Bailey ; and cheerfully inquired—“ If he had learned who were the persons he had been so happy as to assist ? ”

“ The gentleman is the honourable Mr. Beaumarris, a brother of Lord Llanberry’s, who has been many years settled at Lisbon as a Portuguese merchant ; the lady is his sister, whom he lately brought to this place for change of air, she being in the last stage of a decline ; she is many years younger than he, and appears of a very different description ; but her lamp of life is so nearly burnt out, poor thing, that however amiable she may be, I cannot think her few remaining days worth the dreadful purchase you have paid for them.”

The excellent constitution enjoyed by Mr. Sedgewood, and the uncommon advantage of being attended by an English surgeon, who happened to be in Leghorn at the time, enabled him to leave his bed much sooner than could have been expected. At the earliest period of his convalescence, Mr. Beaumarris waited upon him, not only to thank him for his life, and the preservation of his property, a thing of equal importance, but to press him to make his house at Lisbon his home, if a visit to Portugal was included in his route : he added—“ That his sister and self had delayed their return, until their benefactor’s health was in some measure re-established ; but now, having the satisfaction of seeing him out of all danger, they were desirous of embarking immediately.”

To this Mr. Sedgewood replied, by expressing a desire of seeing the lady he had been so happy as to rescue from the flames, as her form and features had made an impression on his mind which could never be erased, though in a moment of such horror.

“She is equally desirous of seeing you, sir,” replied Mr. Beaumarris, “but she is so weak, that there are only a few hours in the day when she is able to do it—could you see her now?”

“With great pleasure,” replied Frederick.

There was a rapid movement in the pulse, and a hectic flushing in the cheek of the invalid, which, in Mr. Bailey’s opinion, indicated a degree of fever, which ought to have precluded any further intercourse with visitants on this day; but as it appeared probable that Mr. Beaumarris would leave Leghorn very soon, he did not oppose his intention; and, in a short time, that gentleman returned with his sister.

The lady entered, leaning on the arms of her brother and her maid. Her form was still elegant, though wasted to a shadow, and her countenance still beautiful; and as she fixed her eyes on Frederick, he felt their mild lustre vibrate through his frame; and the emotion he felt could scarcely be called surprise, when Mr. Bailey was astonished at hearing Mr. Beaumarris announce his sister as the honourable Mrs. Dermot.

This lovely woman was already aware that she was about to meet not only the preserver of her life from a frightful death, but the amiable young man who had been the subject of several letters from her daughter, who, in her own artless language, had dwelt on his merits in such a manner, as to alarm the tender mother for the future happiness of this beloved child; feeling as she did, that the late alarm she had experienced had abridged the term of a life, long held on a precarious tenure, she could not resist the desire she had to see and converse with one who was become, on various accounts, so interesting to her; and she would not lose a moment in availing herself of the permission she had received to visit him.

A very short conversation enabled the anxious and discerning mother to discover, that whatever might be the predilection of her daughter in favour of this admirable young man, it was answered on his part by every mark of

sincere affection ; though she likewise observed that there was some cause of uneasiness lurking at his heart, which made him deem it a duty to conceal, if not eradicate, his passion ; this she supposed proceeded from his consciousness that the disapprobation of his parents would follow his avowal of his choice, and this idea distressed her much, though she flattered herself that time might remove it. Such was Mrs. Dermot's delicacy that, had she been in possession of health and prosperity, months, and even years, might have passed without any endeavour on her part either to develop the feelings, or second the views of Frederick ; but sensible on how fragile a thread her existence now hung, and having but one fond care which chained her soul to earth, one dear being for whose welfare her prayers were incessantly breathed, no wonder her anxious mind, in this period of trying solicitude, sought to pierce the veil which enveloped the fate of her child, and to read distinctly the motives and intentions of a person she esteemed so highly, and admired so much, that she could not wonder at the preference he had (even on so short an acquaintance) excited in her daughter.

With these views, Mrs Dermot, on the following day, visited Frederick alone ; and as Mr. Bailey was absent, had the opportunity she wished, of witnessing his manner when speaking without constraint of her daughter, a conversation to which she led, by observing how great a sacrifice she had made by leaving Arabella in England.

"So great, madam," said Frederick, confusedly, "that I cannot conceal my surprise at your inflicting on yourself and Miss Dermot such a distressing privation."

"We are all called upon, at one time or other, to make sacrifices of *some* objects of our love, to *other* objects of our love," said the lady, viewing the countenance of her companion with a scrutinizing glance ; but not receiving the knowledge she expected to read in that intelligent page, after a short silence on both sides, she continued to say—  
 "I was left an orphan, early in life, to the care of two brothers, who were both many years older than myself, being the youngest of a large family, whose intermediate branches were cut off by infantine diseases. My fortune was small ; but as my person was tolerable, and my family genteel, my brother expected that I should marry *well*, in the common acceptation of the word ; and although they took no pains to improve my scanty portion, or supply

the loss of my parents by their tenderness, yet they expected from me an implicit obedience to their commands, and a servile dependence on their assistance.

“I was indebted for my education, and, indeed, every comfort I could be said to enjoy, to a Mrs. Dermot, the distant relation of my mother; she was a widow, with only one son, whose education obliged her to part with him; and she had great pleasure in supplying the loss of his society with that of a young creature, who appeared thrown on the protection of any one; as my eldest brother was married to an extravagant, thoughtless woman, and my youngest, being, like myself, poorly portioned, was engaged in a commercial undertaking at Lisbon. Thus circumstanced, it was no wonder that my affections as a daughter were given to the only one from whom I had ever experienced the cares of a mother; and that in time the many virtues of her son led me to form that connexion which made her become such.

“Lord Llanberry made my connexion with this most excellent man an excuse for deserting me; and Mr. Beaumarris, though not on friendly terms with him, made my marriage an apology for his neglect of me; happy in my connexion, I thought not of either.

“Years passed by; I became a widow. My good mother did not long survive her excellent son; my own health began to fail; and in looking at my Arabella, I could not help wishing, that in case of my death, she might experience some degree of protection from her relatives. Lord Llanberry had taken no notice of my sorrows; but from Beaumarris I had received occasional letters; and when I complained of my health, he pressed me to try the effect of a warmer climate, and visit *him*: there was a coldness in his style, which made me tremble at the idea of exposing my gentle Arabella to the reluctant kindness of such a relative, especially as he was still a bachelor; and I knew, by the experience I had of youthful sorrows, how melancholy her situation would be, if bereft of me in a foreign country; she would be left to experience no better consoler than her mercantile uncle; whereas, if I left her with our good friends, the Montagues, I could repose on *their* love to her; and in the consciousness of having spared *her* from sorrow, should reap consolation myself.”

“Certainly,” said Frederick, while a deep crimson suffused his cheek, “it must be allowed that Miss Dermot possesses friends at the vicarage, who are well qualified to fulfil all the duties of the office.”

“So I thought; and as I have secured to her a fortune that ensures independence, though it denies superfluity, if she never enjoys more, she will, I trust, be content; but yet I felt it to be a duty which I owed to *her*, as well as that care which my *own* health demanded, to accept the long-delayed kindness of my brother, and for that purpose I tore myself from the only being on earth that could now render either life or fortune valuable to me. From my present state of weakness, you will perceive that all hopes of the former are fled; but I am warranted in saying, that I have no doubt but my daughter will eventually reap the latter from the bequest of Beaumarris, who, though a very close man, is, I think, too just to deceive me.”

Exhausted with speaking so much, Mrs. Dermot sunk back in her chair, expecting, but in vain, some comment from Frederick; while he was still listening in silent dread for that conclusion of her story which would declare her daughter the affianced bride of Montague; and though dying to know the extent of his misfortune, he had not the courage to pronounce one sentence which could procure him relief.

Mrs. Dermot was, on her part, not less puzzled; she began to fancy she had been mistaken in her surmises, and did not, till then, know the extent of her disappointment in such a case; to conceal the emotion as far as possible, she said—“Have you heard, Mr. Sedgewood, that Captain Montague has sailed for America?”

Mr. Sedgewood replied in the negative, adding—“He had not the honour of being acquainted with him.”

“True; but if my Arabella guesses right, you have had the pleasure of being very serviceable to him; and it was most likely that you would have inquired, by some means, what had become of the person you had benefited so much. Poor fellow, he spent but a few hours with his family previous to embarkation; but he confessed all his faults, and made many good resolutions, which I hope he will keep. There was a time when he appeared so amiable, that if there had been any attachment between him and Arabella, I should not have opposed their union, having myself been so very happy in a marriage contract-

ed under similar circumstances; but, with many good propensities, poor George has repeatedly been guilty of errors that have destroyed both my hopes and those of his worthy father; it is, however, a consolation to us both to know, that although the young people have a sincere regard for each other, it is merely fraternal, and *our* disappointments have not been experienced by them."

Frederick arose—sat down again—his colour rose and fell alternately; and Mrs. Dermot now beheld, with trembling joy, that her hopes had not been false: the effect this produced on her emaciated frame, now much injured by the great exertion she had made, was too much for her; and when Frederick, sinking on his knees, besought her consent to his wishes, she fell fainting on his neck, murmuring the glad accents she was unable to utter.

From this moment Mrs. Dermot found it impossible to quit Frederick, who, on his part, determined to accompany her; and as his spirits had gained an accession, which appeared to have the happiest effect on his health, they embarked altogether for Gibraltar. Mr. Beaumarris being informed of the situation of Frederick's heart, which afforded him as much pleasure as any thing could possibly do in the same line of happiness; but it was but *too* observable, that the rapid decline of Mrs. Dermot followed the denouement which had so much interested and affected her. It appeared to Frederick, that her maternal love, having thus fulfilled its last tender duty, was now about to reap the reward of her cares, by a reunion with the much-loved partner of her fondest affections, and already anticipated the foretaste of a beatified intercourse with him; for in the little conversation she was now able to hold, some tender remembrance of her husband, some wish that her daughter might taste the joy she had once known, was ever the subject of her discourse. Her confidence in the virtues of Frederick increased with the knowledge of his character; and she received him as a son sent from Heaven to close the eyes of a parent, whose tenderness in sparing her child from this painful duty, was thus mercifully repaid in the hour when she most felt that awful truth—"Some pious hand the closing eye requires." *It does*

On arriving at Gibraltar, it was soon found that this admirable woman was fated to breathe her last amongst her own countrymen; for she became too ill to leave her couch.

and declared that she would never again adventure on ship-board. Frederick, devoted to her will, attended her with all the care of a son, and even the attention of a daughter; his late sufferings, which were the first he had ever experienced, had given him the power of appreciating the nature of bodily infirmity, and added to general humanity those finer tones of pity, which teaches the power of becoming useful, as well as tender, to the object of solicitude.

Mrs. Dermot thus had an opportunity of witnessing, during a short period, those peculiar traits of character which are generally unfolded by slower degrees; she had witnessed in him the most heroic bravery, and the gentlest kindness; had seen him capable not only of that courageous exertion called for in the hour of danger, under the stronger impulses of a generous nature, but that quiet constancy of compassion, that undeviating, consistent tenderness, so rarely to be met with in young people, and which always argues as much strength of mind as goodness of disposition; and every hour was her fervent aspirations breathed to Heaven for blessings on his head, and prayers that her beloved child might enjoy his protection through life, and expire in his arms.

Notwithstanding her weakness, Mrs. Dermot had written a letter at intervals to her daughter, relating the whole of her acquaintance with Frederick, and the conversations she had held with him; she had likewise addressed a letter to *his* mother, relating more fully than she could do to Arabella, the perilous state and dreadful death from which he had delivered her; and concluded with most tenderly recommending her beloved child to the maternal protection of Lady Caroline, if she should be so happy as to become the wife of her son; and concluded with a fervent apostrophe to the Divine Being, beseeching him to grant that her daughter might be permitted to smooth the death-bed pillow of that dear parent, whose son had been to her the angel of comfort in a land of strangers, and at a period the most awful and affecting. This letter cost her many tears, and scarcely had her trembling hands the power to fold it; she was thus engaged when Frederick paid his accustomed visit, and begged permission to assist her endeavours.

When the letter was sealed, Mrs. Dermot requested him to take charge of it; but desired that the other might be forwarded by the first packet. Observing that he looked a

little disappointed, she took her watch from the place where it hung above her head, (being now too weak to leave her bed,) and told him he had her permission to carry that to Arabella; and beckoning her maid to reach her a small casket, she took thence a diamond ring, which she begged him to present to Miss Montague; and then drawing a valuable hoop from her finger, told him she wished *that* to accompany the letter to Lady Caroline; so saying, she sunk back exhausted on her pillow, and as Frederick looked anxiously in her countenance, he perceived an expression of coldness in her pallid features that alarmed him. Turning to the maid, he desired her in a whisper to fetch Mr. Beaumarris; as the girl left the room, he perceived Mrs. Dermot raise something she had taken from her pillow to her lips, while a slight convulsion passing over her fine features, convinced him that his fears were but too justly founded. Frederick was young—the pale form of the king of terrors had never yet met his eye, and to meet it first in one so beloved, had something in it that, for a moment, appalled his heart; he sunk on his knees by the bedside, and a fervent, though inarticulate prayer, was breathed from his very heart. The countenance of the expiring saint now turned towards him, illumined by a gentle smile, and the words, “Frederick, *my son*,” escaped her quivering lips, while the direction of her eye glanced towards the thing she held in her hand, which was entangled in her handkerchief.

“*My mother*, is this your parting boon to me?” said the youth, gently disengaging it.

“It is, *my son*, and may God bless ye both!”

Frederick seized the precious boon, the picture of Arabella and her father enclosed in one case, and which he had never been permitted to see till now; eagerly pressing it to his lips, and then gazing on it with the rapture of a fond, though weeping heart, for a few moments he saw only the form of a youthful beauty thus presented to his eye. A faint sigh tore him from the lovely object; he cast his eyes upon the bed, and perceived that it was the last which would ever escape the lips of the fair ruin before him; hastily placing his treasure in his bosom, he gave his whole mind to the tender sorrow which pervaded his heart for the loss of this valuable friend; and bitter were the tears he



was shedding on the unconscious corpse, when the arrival of Mr. Beaumarris, with the maid, interrupted his sacred sorrows.

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## CHAP VI.

The web of life is a mingled yarn, good and evil.

JOHNSON.

WHEN Frederick had paid the last duties to that dear departed friend, to whose society he had been so singularly introduced, and from whom he had gained those hopes which, now more than ever, had awakened that passion which seemed to him the charm of existence, and the sole root of happiness, he became extremely anxious to return to England; which desire Mr. Bailey did not oppose; for as the residence of Englishmen in Spain was rendered unpleasant, from the state of warfare then existing between the two countries, he did not think it safe to visit that kingdom; and as he perceived that a further intercourse between Mr. Beaumarris and his pupil was not likely to render people so dissimilar better friends, but rather to the contrary, he was persuaded the best thing they could do would be to sail for England with the first convoy, and took measures accordingly.

When Mr. Bailey returned from the coffee house where he had met the captain of a vessel about to sail, and had agreed for their passage, he was waylaid by the young English girl who had attended Mrs. Dermot, and who besought him to take her along with him to England, instead of letting her go back to that filthy Portugal with Mr. Beaumarris, who had promised, indeed, to let her go in one of his own ships, but who she knew very well would take no more care of her than if she was an old wine cask.

Mr. Bailey hesitated; but the poor girl renewed her entreaties with so many tears, that the good man knew not how to refuse her; so he told her he would consider of it, and settle the matter in good time.

Many people would have thought, that as the girl was young, and remarkably handsome, the good tutor was considering how far such a travelling companion was eligible for his pupil; but, in truth, the honest gentleman was no

gifted with a spark of that necessary-enough sort of second sight which could look to consequences of this nature ; he set out on his travels without a spark of suspicion that “such things were ;” and as his pupil had not called the jealousy of his virtue, or the convenient blindness many people so situated are pleased to assume, into action, the worthy mentor returned with as much knowledge of the *sins* of the world, which is generally abbreviated by the “true knowledge of the world,” as he set out with ; and he had therefore no other objection to Ellen’s company, than what arose simply from her being a woman, an animal of which he knew very little more than that they wore petticoats, were ignorant of Latin and medals, loquacious, timid, and intrusive ; and only desirable when they were musical, because he had a particular taste for music.

His pupil’s observations on the world being less concentrated by scientific pursuit, and aided by a different temperament, were more decisive ; and *he* was sensible that if Mrs. Dermot had thought this step proper, she would have consigned Ellen to *his* care, rather than to that of her brother ; but he could not prevail on himself to refuse her solicitations, conscious that no evil could arise from it, as Mr. Bailey would be her protector. Mr. Beaumarris was extremely glad to be rid of the poor girl, and gave immediate orders that all the baggage of his late sister should be packed up, and sent along with her ; and when all was settled, he wrote by her the following letter to his niece :—

“MY DEAR NIECE,

“Your mother departed this life 26th instant, A. M. and was interred in the burial ground at this place, with due honours, as a Beaumarris. Her clothes, &c. are forwarded by bearer, who has behaved well. Should you, at a proper time, become the wife of Frederick Sedgewood, son and heir of Sir Theodore Sedgewood, bart. I shall consider your child or children my heirs, agreeable to promise made your late mother, of which event be pleased to give due notice.

“From your affectionate uncle,

“CHARLES BEAUMARRIS.

“Gibraltar, 1782.”

From this specimen, it may be perceived that the honourable writer was not remarkably sentimental; yet his letter must be allowed to contain as much as many volumes can boast in many cases, there being, in the first place, necessary information; secondly, conversation; thirdly, recommendation; and, fourthly, a promise, which, though conditional, was certainly desirable; and, in his own opinion, was far the best part of the letter, an opinion I have no inclination to dispute, as I hold it myself.

While our travellers are stemming a rough, but not raging sea, in the Bay of Biscay, it may not be amiss to inquire how the worthy inhabitants of Sedgewood Park are passing the lonely hours in the absence of their son.

If the reader will take the trouble to recollect the latter part of the lives of my great grandfather, and my great-great uncle, he will remember, that at a very advanced period of their lives, they were capable of pursuing a favourite plan, for the benefit of those they loved, with an ardour unchilled by the winter of life, and an energy unimpaired by mental imbecility. This happy art of protracting life, by living in the happiness and honour of his descendants, my good grandfather possessed in an eminent degree: and he was now relighting the flame, by a preparation for presenting his son as a candidate at the ensuing election; and entered into the idea with only the more avidity, because it was generally understood that a warm opposition might be expected, a circumstance which had never occurred in the annals of the family. It had been proposed to Sir Theodore, by many of the first landholders in the county, to bring his son forward as the representative of Yorkshire itself; but this the baronet had declined, from a principle of affection to Fairborough, and a desire of keeping his son attached to a spot where his ancestors had lived so many generations, in that state of unvarying respectability, and in the exercise of those unobtrusive, but solid virtues, which preserved the dignity of their rank, untarnished by emoluments that often degrade what they affect to adorn; and yet unimpaired by any extravagance that might obstruct their benevolence, or diminish their utility; and though he wished to see his son become a "burning and a shining light" in the political hemisphere, he was still more desirous of seeing him a steady one; and as he was bound, in heart at least, to a young woman the baronet considered

without fortune, he became the more anxious to preserve his attachments unimpaired to that paternal domain, where he would ever find a noble sufficiency, and a tenantry attached to his person and his interests.

Many of the surrounding gentry, anxious to make the most of their property, had sold portions of their land to monied men, who had improved the purchase by building; several manufactures had, of course, been introduced; and in the course of a few years, Fairborough had received a renovation of inhabitants and an increase of wealth, which had, in a great measure, changed her character from that of a pleasant retirement for genteel people of small fortunes, to that of a thriving, trading borough; but the antipodes were not more apart than the manners of the old town and the new; the claims of money on one hand, and family pride on the other, clashed perpetually at church and market, in public and private; in all places, and upon all occasions, the claims of each party were heard; and if an inhabitant of the moon (who might be supposed to be impartial) had come down to Fairborough, it is difficult to say whether he would have laughed most at the vulgar ostentation displayed by one party, or the worn-out gentility exhibited by the other; whether he would have found it more tolerable to dine with Mr. Glazeall, the great calimanco-maker, who married Rachel Rasp the miller's daughter for the sake of her fortune, and kept the best table in all the borough, or at Squire Featherbottom's, who was descended lineally from Alfred the Great's principal gosherd, and whose lady derived her pedigree from the very knight who laid the burning ploughshares for queen Emma to walk over; and whose dinners were like Mr. Shandy's aunt Dinah's husband's nose; (saving the name, there were no dinners at all;) in one case the poor moonite would have been sick with surfeit, in the other with starvation.

My grandfather, happy in his connexions, and benevolent in his disposition, was disposed to rejoice in the prosperity of Fairborough, rather than to cavil with the arrogance of a few upstart individuals, of whose insolence he heard much, but saw little; for there was still a great gulf between them, which could not be passed for a considerable time; but the progress of power derived from wealth is rapid, and the old gentleman was surprised to find that a few years had destroyed a barrier at one time apparently im-

pregnable; and that whilst he had been shut up with his son, pursuing the history of former ages, and kindling the lamp of British freedom at the flame of attic eloquence and Roman virtue, his own country had turned over a new page in her history, and was swollen to a giant in her commercial bulk; whilst her aristocratic members were dwindling into pigmy forms, like blighted membranes.

As a man, my grandfather united a courageous mind, with a mild, placid, and agreeable disposition; and when to this was added the true humility which belonged to him as a sincere practical Christian, it must be allowed that few gentlemen were more likely to conciliate the jarring feelings of his neighbours, or to enjoy his own opinions and habits unmolested; but the time was not yet come, when the sons of industry added any knowledge of books or men to their stock of information; and the sudden influx of wealth ever renders ignorance insolent. This was precisely the present case with the *new* people, as they were styled, at Fairborough, at the time I am speaking of; and my grandfather, though with the best disposition in the world, was not only too much of the old school, but too much of an old man, to give into claims he could not comprehend, or countenance conduct he could not approve; and when he found that there was in the very heart of his little kingdom a cabal forming to oppose his son, he felt a resolution of asserting his long-dormant claims, and of calling those he emphatically styled his own people about him, as strong as any of his ancestors had done, when the legions of Craven had flown to their standard; even the military ardour of his youth seemed to revive before the expected contest; and to the great surprise of Lady Caroline, the first public dinner he gave after declaring his intention, beheld him drest in his full uniform, though it had not seen daylight for many years, not even at his daughter's wedding.

This dinner was preparative to a more extensive entertainment, which was given in honour of Frederick having attained his twenty-first year, on which day my grandfather made over to him the greatest part of the noble fortune acquired by his mother. The day was observed with even more rejoicing than had ever taken place on similar occasions, and the health of the distant heir was drunk with enthusiasm by assembled thousands: my grandfather on this day pledged himself for the support of his son in the

expected conflict, and the whole country re-echoed the sentiment with increasing plaudits; and the praises of their son on every side poured welcome incense in the ears of the idolizing parents, who, could they have that day witnessed the situation of their beloved heir, would have been as completely wretched as they were now happy, as he was at this very time experiencing all the dangers of a violent storm; such and so various are the situations of life.

Frederick and his suite, after sufferings which have been often described, but can never be adequately conceived by any but those who have experienced them, were at last enabled to land on the western coast of Ireland; but were so overdone by their sufferings, that, notwithstanding the desire of reaching home now superseded every other, they were obliged to stop a few days for necessary repose, and therefore judged it right to forward letters to Mr. Montague, to inform him of the change which had taken place, of Miss Dermot's loss, and likewise to say that it was his intention to call upon the family at Norton in his journey home. He wrote likewise to his father, giving him a hasty sketch of his improved prospects, and his anxiety to return to his dear family. Several untoward circumstances hindering them from proceeding through Ireland so rapidly as they had wished, together with a second delay from bad weather at sea, occasioned these letters to precede their actual appearance at each place nearly three weeks; in which time "she had said to her neighbour," that Mr. Frederick Sedgewood was coming home again, quite a poor emaciated figure, as pale as his grandfather's bust on the monument; that a gentleman had seen him in Ireland, who said he looked quite worn down, doubtless with so early a life of debauchery, for what else could injure a man at his time of life? but what was worst of all, he had brought a mistress along with him from Italy; and his *man* said to the gentleman's man, that his master always wore a picture next his heart, of a lady who died in his arms; so that altogether there could be no doubt that he was a very sad young man indeed, and that in spite of all the old baronet's boast about him, he was no better than he should be.

This was, however, not the time, for one neighbour to say any thing to another, except in the spirit of party; so that, in despite of this insinuation, my grandfather's side,

though they were by far the strongest talkers, and could have forwarded a tale of this kind with more adroitness than the other, would not listen to it at all; or, where they were obliged to do so, turned it all off with the happiest effrontery imaginable:—"Dear me, what a piece of work is here indeed about nothing! suppose Mr. Sedgewood has got a mistress, 'tis what many a man has done before him, who has turned out very good and steady, when his wild oats were sown; for my part, I am never fond of seeing old heads on young shoulders; the manners of other countries license irregularities in youth, and those who are at Rome must do as Rome does; if the qualifications of a parliament-man included chastity, there would be a thin house on both sides, I fancy."

Happily, the little village of Norton did not contain any neighbours, either to disseminate the report, or to soften it; and the hearts of the inhabitants were too deeply affected to think on any thing but the subject of Mrs. Dermot's death, which, though it might have been long expected, yet struck them as sudden at last; her last letter did not reach them till two days after that which was received by Mr. Montague, and the first sight of it affected Miss Dermot so much, that she was obliged to desire Miss Montague to read it to her. The gentle Emily was often obliged to suspend her task, overwhelmed with tears, which she imputed to the circumstance of reading a letter written by the hand of one so dear to her, and which was now laid in the dust; and before it was concluded, she was obliged to resign the task, and fly to her own apartment: but the tears that now streamed from the eyes of the lovely Arabella, were, from henceforward, of a milder character; and while she wept over the parent she had lost, her timid heart, in tender and modest solicitude, looked forward to the lover she had gained, though she still persuaded herself that gratitude for his kindness to her parent was the only emotion that made her heart vibrate so warmly at his name.

"But what took place when they met?"

Oh, a great deal, madam, I assure you; but as they said nothing, or next to nothing, I cannot retail speeches which were never uttered; as far as I can learn, when Frederick really made his appearance, Arabella looked so very red, and Emily so very pale, that in a moment they changed the

complexions; and Miss Dermot burst into tears as she welcomed the deliverer of her mother; in truth, there was in this meeting an air of so much sorrow, and embarrassment, too, it was necessarily so short, and, from the delicacy of both parties, so restrained, that although it was sweetened by love, yet the sugar lay out of sight, and never rose to the top, till it was settled that Mr. Sedgewood, after paying his respects to his parents, would have the pleasure of visiting Mr. Montague again very soon.

But when the long-expected youth returned to his paternal mansion, *all* was joy *unmixed*, and the heart of each fond parent throbbed with delight, that seemed to renovate the days of youth; while their sparkling eyes congratulated each other on the possession of such a treasure one moment, and again turned to admire him on the next; but scarcely could the gratified baronet listen to the development of that affair, which being to Frederick the sum of all earthly bliss, he concluded must be of the last importance to his father, ere the good man broke on him with the news of the expected election, which was now on the eve of taking place, and to which his immediate attention must be given. Frederick could not help smiling at the different schemes of happiness each was projecting with equal eagerness; but finding it was impossible to gain his father's ear for the tale of tender interest he wished to excite for the afflicted Arabella, he left the old baronet to discuss the arrangement of dinners, and the situation of hustings, with his steward, and sought the dressing room of his mother. Her gentle bosom opened with avidity to all his feelings, and he now presented her with Mrs. Dermot's letter, which excited her most lively sympathy; and she declared, "that she would not delay writing to the amiable subject of his solicitude, and inviting both her and Miss Montague to visit Sedgewood Park, and would go herself to meet them as far as she was able." On second thoughts this plan appeared impracticable, until the election was over, as the young lady could not join in the gay parties it would induce during her mourning; and Lady Caroline had recourse to her pen, to paint the warm interest she took in her affianced daughter; and so endearing was this first proof of attention to the bosom of the grateful Arabella, that perhaps even the former effusion of a warmer passion which accompanied it was not read more frequently, though it must be allowed that it was once kissed a little more fervently.



*Says She to her Neighbour, What?*

Dear, precious moments! when the sweet dawaings of artless passion steal on the youthful heart of innocence, like the steps of angelic visitants, when they trod the bowers of Eden, ever be your memory embalmed in my heart, and ballowed as the purest pleasure nature has allotted me!—

Yes, madam, you may smile, but there are certain associations attached to the simplest actions of our lives, which are, when connected with pure love, not only the most delicious traits of our existence here, but the strongest proofs reason affords of our claims to existence hereafter. Have you never locked yourself in your chamber to read a note an the world might have seen?—have you never put a scrap of paper in your bosom, because of the hand writing? or pressed a glove to your heart, when the owner was far away? if you have, you know what I mean; if not, there is no teaching you.

CHAP. VII.

Hail, wedded love!

MILTON.

“It’s a hard matter to say whether my young maister, or my oud one, bees thrangest at this very toime,” said the groom, as he prepared Frederick’s horse to pay his second visit to Norton.

This observation was so true, that I cannot pretend, at this distance of time, to decide the question, and can only observe, that the nearer each approached the object of his wishes, the more ardent he became in the pursuit; for Frederick saw every hour new beauties and new virtues, in the lovely maid, who engrossed his every thought, and centered his every wish; while his good father, with not less eagerness, panted to obtain his object, and increased in ardour with every obstacle that opposed his wishes; and as the fears of his friends magnified the powers of his antagonist, and piqued his pride, he launched into a sea of expense, which, not being consistent with his own prudence, nor the situation of his son, he dignified with the name of patriotism, which is certainly the very handsomest excuse a man can make for extrayagance, since the time has been when it could give dignity to poverty. The fact was, my grat

father loved his country more than most men; he doated on his son; he cared very little for his money; but he was very tenacious of his family consequence; and from the admixture of these notions, of which at least four-fifths were the natural growth of virtue and affection, which I consider a very fair proportion of good in any man, and a much greater than I fear is often found, the good baronet was, step by step, led on to the joyful summit of his hopes. He saw his son elected, the family consequence re-established, all the old families in the neighbourhood consoled, or delighted, the *possibility* of amazing good being done to the country by the single voice of an independent country gentleman, who despised party cabal, and was as little disposed to join a corrupt ministry on one hand, as a railing demagogue on the other; and with all these brilliant views in his head, no wonder Sir Theodore was the happiest man in the county; though his old steward looked grave, and even Lady Caroline herself expressed a wish that her son's outset in life had been a little less expensive.

Says she to her neighbour, "The baronet has made a fine job of this; it has cost him not only every shilling he had in the funds, but Lady Caroline's Staffordshire estate, on which his son was to live, must either go to the hammer, or be mortgaged to its value; and Sedgewood Park itself must become involved to a considerable extent."

"So I hear," returned the neighbour; "and, besides that, I am told Lady Caroline herself will be obliged to part with her family jewels before her son can marry; for as he has chosen a poor parson's daughter, with not a shilling in her pocket, something must be done to set the young people forward, you know, and I am told they are actually gone to London for that very purpose; for Lady Frances Stickerton's woman told my housekeeper's sister, that her lady had actually got them in her cabinet the night before she set off for the metropolis; but it's no wonder; the old fool made the thing ten times more expensive than there was the least occasion for—feasting half the county."

"Oh, 'twas absolute dotage," returned the first; "a man must be superannuated to throw away his money so madly. I am grieved to the heart for the young man, who really never seemed to care any thing about the matter; and I'm sure poor Lady Caroline is much to be pitied, to see her fortune thrown away in this manner: as for the

baronet, he deserves what he has got—he may thank himself for his sorrow.”

These were the neighbours, who, a month before, had told Sir Theodore, that if he did not do this, that, and the other dashing thing, it would be impossible for him to carry the day, which would be ten thousand pities, for really, such a charming, amiable, handsome, clever man as Mr. Sedgewood, would be a national acquisition—the representative, too, of such an ancient family. Who ever heard of such a thing as a Sedgewood being opposed in Fairborough before—a place which twenty years before had not an inhabitant who did not depend upon the park for his bread? to be opposed, too, by a low fellow, put in by a new-made lord, whose fortune was derived from his lady, the grand-daughter of a tobacconist? No! if they were Sir Thé, they would spend the last shilling in their pockets—nay, the last drop of blood in their veins, before such a son as he had should yield to such an opponent.

When my grandfather looked over old Robertson's accounts, he looked a little grave, and observed, “That having never been in debt, he should not like it now; but as it was unavoidable, he must submit to a heavy mortgage on the Park, of course, since Lady Caroline's estates were settled on her son, whose outset, in life should not be clouded by an expense, which, though incurred on his account, could hardly be said to have his concurrence, though he was certain it would never meet his reproof.” As the old gentleman said this, though his patriotic self-approbation enabled him to speak firmly, and even cheerfully, yet at the last word, his eye twinkled, and the lid was moistened.

Lady Caroline and Frederick were sitting on each side of him; as if moved instinctively, they both rose at the same moment, each seizing the hand that was next them, and pressing it tenderly to their lips, on which the words, “my father,” and “my Theodore,” fondly hung, and were, after a moment's affecting pause, followed by a decisive declaration from each, that every rood of the Staffordshire estate should be immediately sold, and the paternal roof, which now sheltered them, remain unpolluted.

“But, Caroline, the house in Staffordshire is dear to you; 'tis an old family establishment of the Inglebys; and,

during our lives. you, doubtless, wished your son to reside in a place that——”

“Is it possible, my love, that you can suppose your wife is any thing but a Sedgewood *now*, when you remember that for three-and-forty years, her fate has been bound up in that precious name? or, that after our long separation, I could wish my son settled in any place, but one where my eyes could witness his happiness, exult in his virtues, and day by day thank God that he resembled his father?”

“Nor could I be so blest even in Paradise,” said Frederick, with a glowing smile, “as in bringing my Arabella to your immediate care and protection, my dear sir, and in restoring to her, in my indulgent mother, the parent she has lost. Her path in life has hitherto been humble and retired; and the blaze of wealth and splendour would rather dazzle than delight her. In the house where your father was blest with a tender companion, and a lovely family, *we* will endeavour to participate his bliss, and emulate his character, since I know my aunt Barbara will readily accede to our wishes by resigning it.”

The fugitive drop which had gathered in the baronet's eye, impelled by the sweetest emotions of the heart, coursed slowly down his venerable cheek; passing his arms round his wife, he laid his head upon her faithful bosom, and silently indulged the sweet emotion which she fully participated; and while the heart of each, in grateful adoration, rose to Heaven for the possession of such a son, that son, with equal extacy, hung in affectionate reverence over his beloved parents, with eyes, whose humid glance bespoke the feelings of his heart, and the prayer that it dictated.

Very soon after this period, the Staffordshire estate was sold by private contract; the jewels of Lady Caroline were sent to London, to be new set, not sold, as she told her neighbour; for, in all communications of that kind, some circumstances are ever supplied by the imagination, which renders family occurrences a species of epic poetry, which is, doubtless, the chief reason why people that read little, adopt tattling to supply its place; and all debts and demands whatever on Sir Theodore were paid off with the usual punctuality of the family, with whom it had ever been a rule not only to pay their tradespeople, but to do it in such good time as to render their custom really beneficial to the party—a practice, I am told, grown obsolete in

my dear sir

the south of England, and which has led all descriptions of shopkeepers and artificers to adopt a system of self-defence, which, though not quite consistent with morality, is yet justifiable on the code of sound policy.

It was now observed, that Sir Theodore was again as busy as ever he had been, and really seemed in such good spirits, one would think he had been gaining thousands instead of losing them; he was daily receiving packages of furniture from London, in addition to the many smart things he received from the new upholstery-rooms lately opened at Fairborough, and every thing gave signal of the approaching wedding: and at length he and Lady Caroline set out to receive their intended daughter-in-law, a ceremony some of the neighbours thought might have been dispensed with, all things considered; for "what was there in such a match to make a fuss about, that such old people should put themselves *out* of the way?"—they could not feel that these very things took them thus *into* the way which was most congenial to their hearts, and that in raising this sweetly timid flower to their bosoms, they not only obeyed the dictates of their own generous wishes, but placed a gem there, whose gentle brilliance suffused comfort over their evening hours, and solaced their departing moments:

Lady Caroline was somewhat surprised to find that Miss Montague was not at home on her arrival, as she had been rather suddenly sent for by a friend at some distance, and her place was insufficiently supplied by the wife of a neighbouring gentleman; of course *her* presence became of more importance to the lovely girl, who was about to become so nearly connected with her; and who, while her heart glowed with grateful affection towards them, yet sunk, overwhelmed with blushes, from the ardent, though respectful, gaze of parents, whose boundless attachment to their son must be supposed to render them but too scrupulous as to the merits or deficiencies of his future bride: but in the tender assiduities of Lady Caroline, she soon regained composure; and though the ceremonious manners of Sir Theodore were new to her, they were so blended with the urbanity of his character, and the personal affection they expressed for her, that in a short time she admired that which at first alarmed her, and assured Frederick that she really believed she had never seen a finished gentleman.

she beheld his father; in which sentiment she was cordially joined by Mr. Bailey, who was so polite as to add, that however obvious, few women would have observed it.

At the same altar, near which he had first beheld her two years before, Frederick received the hand of his beloved Arabella from his father, the worthy Mr. Montague performing the ceremony; immediately after which, the party set out for Buxton, as it was the nearest watering-place. This was a way of performing a wedding, become fashionable of late, but by no means in unison with the customs of the Sedgewoods, or with my grandfather's ideas on the subject; but it suited his convenience at present, and he therefore submitted to it; every day he became more attached to his new daughter; and the admiration she excited at Buxton, seemed to give *him* more pleasure than even the happy bridegroom.

Having received letters from aunt Barbara, informing them that the house was ready for their reception, they eagerly embraced the welcome news, especially the baronet, who, on their arrival at Fairborough, revealed the secret business which had made him acquiesce so quietly in the scheme of a private marriage; this was the order he had given for the Park House to be new furnished, as the future abode of the young couple, while himself and the old furniture were henceforth to be deemed stationary at the other. Thus, after all his travels, the veteran general doomed himself to draw his last breath where he had drawn his first. 'Twas in vain the young couple remonstrated; the deed was done; and they were drawn in triumph to their future habitation, by the crowd who had assembled to receive them.

On their arrival, letters from Portugal were presented to the bride; but before she had time to open them, a paper was presented to her by the baronet, which was a jointure for treble the amount of her fortune.

Things of this description were so new to Arabella, that she did not immediately understand it; but when Frederick explained it, she turned round, and looking for a moment the thanks she could not speak, threw herself into the arms of Theodore. The old man pressed her with ecstasy to his bosom; and Frederick observing they were too much engaged to attend to the letter of Mr. Beaumarris, very sauci-

ly broke the seal, and exhibiting his treachery to his mother, read as follows:—

“DEAR NIECE,

“Concluding you are by this time become the wife of Frederick Sedgewood, Esq. I do hereby authorize your said husband to draw upon my English banker, Messrs. Barclay and Co. Lombard-street, for five thousand pounds; this house having likewise my orders for forwarding to you personally a present for wedding clothes, seeing your minority deprives your guardians of the power of drawing on them; and it is my wish that you appear as becomes my relative.

“Wishing you much happiness,

“I remain your uncle,

CHARLES BEAUMARKIS.”

In about two months time, Frederick was called to London in his parliamentary capacity, the duties of which he now first began to consider, not having had time to do it before; my grandfather could not resist the desire he felt of accompanying him; and they all set off together, to the great joy of Lady Caroline, who was anxious to see Lady Borrowdale, and to introduce Mrs. Sedgewood to her.

This lovely, but ill-matched woman, had not long since lost her only child, an event which depressed her spirits exceedingly, as it was a source of comfort to her of more than common efficacy, enabling her to pass those hours which the absence of its father rendered gloomy, without repining at his absence, or weeping over the bitter disappointment her youthful heart had met with in the object of her premature choice. She had not seen Frederick since his return, and her heart yearned to embrace the dear companion of her happiest days, and the amiable woman he had thought worthy to share his affections. Her lord having nearly exhausted his fortune, and greatly injured his health, had of late been rather more regular in his conduct; but that circumstance was so far from increasing her domestic happiness, that it appeared rather to have destroyed the melancholy degree of tranquillity he had hitherto permitted her to possess, as his temper, soured by the appointments at the gaming table, and naturally proud and haughty, was now become so very irritable

could not be soothed by patience, nor parried by good humour; and the unfortunate Caroline, though she still tenderly loved him, was obliged to confess, that even the sorrows of desertion were preferable to the eternal inquietudes produced by unprovoked anger, and unfeeling peevishness.

After the first endearments were past, and Lady Borrowdale had time to contemplate the great personal improvement of her brother, the loveliness of his artless; and yet elegant and sensible bride, and the perfect satisfaction which appeared in the countenances of her venerable parents, she began to fear that her noble husband might be extending the liberties of ill-humour to other parts of her family, less likely to endure it than herself; especially as he had thought proper to find great fault with the expense contracted at the election, and had repeatedly used epithets of her father, which she was confident her brother would have severely resented; but in *this* her fears appeared to have misled her; and after several successive visits, it was remarked that the viscount appeared very amiable; and it was hoped by all the family, that either the death of his son, the degree of ill-health he had experienced, or the consciousness that he had hitherto passed his time in unworthy pursuits, which he bitterly repented, had at length had the desired effect, and he was now becoming a good man, and, of course, a good husband.

I am sorry to say that, in truth, not one of these desirable reasons really operated on the specious viscount. He thought his new sister the prettiest woman he had seen since he married his lady; she had likewise the same kind of artless character and modest susceptibility about her, with more sense and vivacity; and as her natural benevolence had induced her to pay him attention as an invalid, he very sagaciously concluded it was possible to interest her still farther; and, as he hated her husband, he determined to do it if he could.

When Lady Borrowdale had the honour of presenting her new sister to her sovereign, it was generally thought that Mrs. Sedgewood was the most beautiful woman in the drawing room; but when the prince had declared *this* to be *his* opinion, that thought found words; and all at once poor unassuming Arabella, who hitherto, like the pale violet, had blushed unseen, known rather by the fragrance of her



unpretending benevolence, than the commanding graces of her person, became all at once the mirror of fashion, and the soul of beauty; for the prince's judgment was the standard of taste. Young, handsome, sprightly, and insinuating, the honours of his illustrious rank were secondary charms, which served only to increase the fascination of his manners, by adding a sense of honour received, to that of delight enjoyed, by those who were blest by his affability, or distinguished by his approbation; he was indeed a star whose brilliance the great orator might have described in as glowing terms as he employed in describing the *entré* of the unfortunate Antoinette, to that deceitful hemisphere where she glittered and fell: and truly might he have said, that a thousand fans would have started from their cases, a thousand pair of resistless eyes shot forth their lightnings, a thousand voluble tongues issued their thunders, and a thousand fair bosoms have palpitated, if but the shadow of obloquy had dared to glance over the path embellished by his footsteps.

Under the seductive influence of fashion, courted, caressed, and admired, it would have been no wonder if this young couple had been led into the snares of extravagance which beset them on every side. The admirers of Frederick were at least as numerous as those of his lady; for he had a political courtship to undergo, from which she was happily exempted, as, except for the shape of her French nightcap, or the name of her friseur, she was seldom complimented by her own sex; whereas, both sexes joined in the snares which were spread for *him*; the men flattered his talents, and admired his wife and his mother; the women looked "unutterable things;" every man is vulnerable somewhere, and the praises bestowed on those he loved found a very ready echo in Sedgewood's; and the lips that uttered must be those of a friend. It is a very pleasant thing to be surrounded with one's friends, and a very innocent one; so Mr. Sedgewood had many friends at his table; and if his wife had possessed a taste for giving stylish routs, flaming concerts, or elegant *petit soupers*, his establishment might have been complete; but as she had no taste that could be put in any competition with her husband's society, and that of his dear parents, in the midst of all this gayety she was like a true rustic, sighing for the shades of Sedgewood Park, and anticipating the time when

leaning on Frederick's arm, she should explore the romantic beauties of Fairborough, or sitting with him in the ruins of its castle, employ her pencil in sketching them, or listen to the legends he related concerning them. Thus, though she never opposed his desire for company, yet her quiet acquiescence, by affording no stimulant, led him to consider what he was about; and he perceived that it was very possible for a man to get himself very imperceptibly into an awkward predicament, without any possibility of affixing vice to his pursuits, or almost impropriety to his character. He found, that in the multitude of his engagements, it had really slipped his mind that his income was curtailed nearly one half by his election expenditure; and that if he lived much longer in his present style, he must either run into debt, abridge his paternal establishment, or demand another supply from his father, which, though it might be readily granted, must curtail his comforts; and the independence of his character, as well as his affection, alike militated against adopting any of these measures.

From his very earliest infancy, it had been the office of my grandfather to teach his son to *think*; he used to say, that other men might put off that era in the education of their children with propriety, perhaps; but his case was different from other fathers. I shall soon be old; he would say, and it is necessary that my son's mind should experience the benefits of an early manhood, as, in case of my *death*, he will be obliged to think for himself; in case of my *life*, he will have to think for himself and *me*. In consequence of this opinion, Frederick was early taught to look beyond the present moment, and to estimate the worth of what was presented to him, rather by its power of conferring stable advantages, than temporary gratification.

Now, my dear madam, I beg you will not image to yourself this same Frederick as a complete *petit maitre* at fifteen, able to wade through all the ceremonies of a country assembly, and place every lady in the country dance according to her family claims, with his hair in full dress, a sword by his side, and a simper on his countenance; neither must you conclude him to be a little quill-driving accountant, trudging after his father's steward, and noting in every bushel of oats that ought to be consumed by his

*a little maitre*

father's horses, and acquainted with the produce of every rood of land in his father's estates; nor yet was he a young antiquarian, who was tied by an old father to the rigid observance of the days of yore, till his manners were as musty as the family records, and his language as obsolete as the royal decrees which granted them; no, madam, my grandfather had an aversion to all sorts of forced plants, whether cucumbers or coxcombs, regarding one bud for his own constitution, and the other for society; and so far from supposing that premature acquirements in manners constituted real manliness of character, he used to say, the boy who is a man at fifteen will be a boy at five-and-twenty; so that it was by mental cultivation, by the perpetual exercise of the understanding, by solid acquirements, not frothy appendages, that his son became capable of conducting himself, at a time when others are in leading strings; but you are not therefore to suppose that Frederick was a humdrum youth, too much tied to the solid parts of education, to have time or inclination for the graceful, and, in fact, necessary manners of a gentleman; or that, because his father retained the manners of the old court, his son must be tinctured with them beyond the line where they are agreeable in a young man; so far from this, my grandfather's long residence with the wandering Tartars having given him an uncommon knowledge of all which constitutes excellence in athletic pursuits, he was singularly anxious that his son should excel in them. Frederick was taught early to dance, ride, row, and fence, in all which exercises he excelled so much, as to be the admiration of every person who saw him so employed; and the general air of graceful ease and unassuming dignity which was thus conferred on his person and gait, was probably more fascinating than the more regular, though striking beauty of his person. As all these kind of endowments were taught him as the rewards of his application to mental studies, a kind of play suitable for a boy, he had never affixed any kind of praise as due to their performance; of course, vanity could never be excited by the species of fame they procured him; to these he added a thorough knowledge of chess; and played billiards better than his father, a circumstance the good baronet did not, however, fully agree to. From mentioning these acquirements, you will perceive that when Lord Borrowdale would have tem-

Frederick to play, he did not decline the invitation from ignorance; but he detested gaming, though he had much amusement in a little trial for superiority of skill; he owed to his education this admirable discrimination between the use of a stimulant, too naturally embraced by the ardour of youth, and which renders young men of fashion and fortune too frequently the prey, and eventually the votaries of this destructive practice, and the real liking for this vice itself, which is at best a spirit of detestable avarice.

I shall only add, that if I had fifty sons, I would endeavour to make them all exactly like my father; but to return to his story:—

Mr. Sedgewood had just made the discovery I spoke of, and which, notwithstanding his many excellent qualities, he had not made quite so soon as he should, at the very time when his beloved Arabella began to find a something in the attentions of her right honourable brother-in-law, which did not exactly accord with her rustic notions; she was become so sincerely attached to his lady, that she had been accustomed to reveal every thought of her heart to her. These thoughts seldom harboured an evil surmise of any human being, though they had been once or twice tintured with jealousy, when the conduct of some ladies of very high fashion had cast looks of tender languishment on her Frederick; but this sensation arose from her own diffidence in her powers of attraction, not from the slightest perception of gallantry in him; and these little fears were generally laughed away by Lady Borrowdale, the moment they were uttered; but as this could not be revealed either to her or any one of the family, and was a source of more disquiet than any she had hitherto experienced, (though the innocence of her own heart prevented her from believing it possible that she could seriously be an object of design to the viscount,) she determined to urge their return to Sedgewood Park, as parliament was now prorogued, and she was in a situation which rendered company irksome to her; and as she happened to mention her wishes at the time when her husband was considering it a most desirable thing, the affair was immediately concluded, with the joyful consent of the baronet and his lady, both of whom had suffered considerably in their health, from the change in their hours since they visited the metropolis. It was therefore signified to Lady Borrowdale

that they would set out immediately, which she did not oppose even by her tears; but when she was alone with Mrs. Sedgewood, she gave them free vent, informing her, that she had for some time been alarmed, lest the advances of the viscount should have awakened the suspicions of her family; and earnestly conjuring her to guard this mark of his depravity from her brother, who, already irritated by observations he could not avoid making, might be led to adopt means of punishing his lordship, equally to be dreaded by them both.

This was the first time, even in all their most private and confidential intercourse, that Lady Borrowdale had ever allowed herself thus to speak of her husband, even to this much-loved friend; nor would she have done it now, but from a principle of gratitude to *her*, and likewise as a guard against the future encroachments of her husband; as she saw that so artless a mind as Arabella's could scarcely believe the existence of a passion so totally unprincipled, and was therefore not prepared so to check his presumptuous advances, as to nip those hopes in the bud, which, if permitted to expand, might awaken the suspicion of Frederick, and involve consequences of the most dreadful nature.

In the admirable conduct of Lady Borrowdale, Mrs. Sedgewood beheld an example of suffering worth, and dignified submission, she could never sufficiently approve; and she determined to make it the model of her own future conduct, if she should be ever so unhappy as to entertain a thought prejudicial to her husband. On mentioning her feelings, Lady Borrowdale candidly informed her, that though her husband's conduct had been in many instances so cruelly selfish, and so grossly unfaithful, as to have warranted her in calling on the interference of her family, yet, as she still tenderly loved him, she had been ever desirous of saving them from the knowledge of her sorrows, in the hope that the time would arrive when he would justly estimate her forbearance, and reward her affection and long suffering by a return to virtue, which she could not hope for, if a public breach was made between them. To the tender sympathy and good counsel of her aunt, Mrs. Barbara Sedgewood, she declared herself indebted for all that was excellent in her conduct, or consolatory to her feelings, and added, that when she reflected upon her youth, her

love of pleasure, and the severity of those sufferings she first experienced, when the viscount's true character was revealed to her, she was convinced that Heaven had in mercy bestowed that excellent friend upon her, as the only medium which could preserve her from falling into a state of morbid dejection on the one hand, or dissipation on the other. "When the best is made of me, said she, with a sweet, though pensive, smile, "I am but a very woman; I must lean for help somewhere—my husband rejected me; I could not lay the weight of a breaking heart on my aged parents, or my wrongs upon my high-spirited brother, so I threw myself and my sorrows on my maiden aunt, who I found, when too late, understood my heart and its troubles better than I had done myself; and I heartily wish every young wife so situated, would look out for a similar confidant."

CHAP. VIII.

It is not less by their knowledge that the rich may benefit the poor, than in the distribution of their fortunes. MISS EDGEWORTH.

"So," says she to her neighbour, "the family is come to the Park two months sooner than was expected; there's nothing else talked of this morning, call where one will; so much fuss, and so much rejoicing, I'm really sick to hear it. People will find themselves sadly deceived, if they expect Fairborough will be much better for people coming down, when they have spent all their money in London. I know it for a fact, that this journey has cost so much, that all the leases, which were out during their absence, must be renewed at a prodigious advance; and in a week's time we shall hear nothing but sighing and groaning; rackrents will be in every body's mouth; and there's going to be a prodigious fall of wood; the whole of the long grove is to come down directly; but no wonder—they say young Mrs. Sedge-wood can get through any thing; and that if they had not come down when they did, all in a hurry, there is no saying what would have happened; indeed, it is whispered that there was an execution in the house; but I would not listen to the person who told me; in fact, I was shocked

beyond any thing—so much as I respect the family, I could not listen to such things; but, dear heart, we live in strange times, though I hope half what one hears is not true; yet there is no saying what one may *live to see*.”

This was very true; for every neighbour *did live to see*, even in these disastrous times, when property and virtue are so perpetually wrecked on the rocks of vice and folly, under the pilotage of inexperience, or blown by the gale of passion, *one* gay, handsome, and admired couple, steer sweetly down the current of life, with reason at the helm, and love in the cabin, distributing, by various channels, the wealth of their talents, as well as income, and thus extending a benefit not more excellent than incalculable.

The active mind of Mr. Sedgewood naturally embraced many means of improvement, which arose from the advanced state of society, and became objects of attention to him, from the necessity now imposed upon him, of taking the management of his affairs more immediately into his hands, and which naturally led him to form some acquaintance with, and some knowledge of, those people who had been his opposers in his election, and the general objects of disgust to the old families in the neighbourhood. The suavity of his manners, and the solidity of his judgment, were equally useful to him, in forming a correct estimate of this class of society, since the former unlocked their hearts, and enabled the latter to exercise its penetration; the consequence of these observations was, that Frederick seriously endeavoured, by gentle degrees, to break down the partition walls which prejudice had so unhappily erected; and by adding refinement to industry on the one hand, and liberality to gentility on the other, produce a degree of intimacy, and a union of interest, equally advantageous to both. His situation as a justice of the peace rendered him a person of much more immediate importance than his higher office as representative of the borough; and as the principal differences he was called on to decide lay amongst the new manufacturers and their men, many of whom having been the sons of his own tenantry, or those of neighbouring gentry, did not treat their masters with the respect which, as *their* masters, was justly due, or between other parties under the influence of the existing factions, fomented and exasperated by the leading powers in each, for a considerable time he was never enabled to decide on any cause

in which he did not give umbrage to *one* party; and his decision excited, in the first instance, the obloquy of abuse, which frequently descended to his person, his character, his family—for anger never discriminates; but when the passion was spent, it was so absolutely impossible not to see the strict impartial justice which had been administered, that the person who had been thus moved could not fail to approve it, and secretly wish it might be administered to himself, if he was similarly situated. He grew ashamed of his folly, and determined never to repeat it; and if his mind was generous, sought for an opportunity of avowing an alteration in his sentiments respecting the justice, which never failed to occur in the course of time: thus, by degrees, confidence was established in one man by both parties; and when that was once done, it spread by a delightful kind of contagion through all the finer windings of society; and that which was begun in the magistrate's chair, was completed by Mrs. Sedgewood in the parlour; for she was not less calculated to win, by mild courtesy and general urbanity, the suffrages of her own sex, than his "pleaded reason" was to obtain the acknowledged sanction of the other; and I believe it will not be disputed that in every family the female voice has a pretty decided influence; so that when mamma and her daughters had been convinced of the propriety of any mode of conduct pointed out at the Park on Monday, he was a very hardy man who was found disputing the point on Thursday, and deserved immortalizing for his fortitude, if he persevered till Saturday; but of that, I believe, the annals of Fairborough furnish no examples; and if they did, I trust it would be found that they yielded to a far higher authority on Sunday; for Mr. Bailey, who was become our vicar, was indefatigable in his endeavours to promote the same spirit of general harmony and good will amongst the people that constituted his flock; and never failed, as far as it was possible, to spread, both by precept and example, the true spirit of Christianity amongst us. Thus, in time, jarring feelings and discordant prejudices were ameliorated; the views of each party enlarged, as their hearts softened towards each other; their children were on one hand permitted, and on the other encouraged, to become agreeable to each other; and the terms of attachment were planted, which hereafter sprung into near connexion; and a universal toleration prevailed to-



wards the new inhabitants, which, awakening their gratitude, laid the foundation for their improvement; and the terms, "proud beggars," and "upstart scoundrels," which had been heretofore so liberally dealt amongst us towards each other, were no longer heard; the vulgar prodigality of Mr. Glazeall's table, his wife's pink satin cloak, double trimmed with swansdown, and his drawing room's new chintz furniture, no longer awoke sneers on one side; nor the meagre fare of 'squire Featherbottom, his daughter's faded brocade, and the oak furniture of his forefathers, called for vulgar ridicule on the other; in short, party spleen gradually subsided; and at length it was fated to receive a mortal wound, though that produced a lingering death, not a sudden one, from the proposition that one assembly room should suffice for both parties, seeing that neither could raise a tolerable dance without the aid of the other.

It had been the custom, time immemorial, for the quality of Fairborough, and the adjoining country, to meet in the town hall on all festive occasions, which, though very low, somewhat damp, and exhibiting various marks of decay, still served for the purpose of convening the old genteel inhabitants once a month, for the purpose of playing shilling whist, and about six couple of country dancers; the music consisted of two old fiddlers and a wretched bass; the lights were distributed in hoops, hung from the roof, in which were four tallow candles, aided by a constellation of five tin sconces over the chimney-piece, which was likewise hung with a framed tablet of the rules of the assembly, part of which, by the lapse of time, were become unintelligible; but that which remained, as Lady Frances Stickerton justly observed, denoted the antiquity of the institution, and, in her opinion, thus proved, beyond any doubt, its amazing merit; they ran as follows:—

"No gentleman to spit in this room; neyther to swere; ne to strike his partner, or his wife, shee bein in this pleace.

"No leady to daunce in black hose; ne to get drunk.

"No gentleman to pull off his wig and wipe his head before a lady in this room; ne to kiss his partner, till he gitteth to the doore.

"N. B. Punch provided for baith sexes; but no smoking admitted till the leadies be departed."

Time had been when many a brave knight, and many a fair dame, had tripped it featly in this same room; but for the last fifty years, there had been a succession of elderly inhabitants at the Park, which had prevented this humble dome from receiving its regular share of attention and improvement; and as what is every body's business, is, by the same rule, nobody's business, and the subscribers very modestly thought that what had done for their forefathers might do for them, or very proudly considered that the present assembly room and its archives could prove they *really* possessed forefathers, which was more than their neighbours could say, from one or other of these causes, doubtless combined with some desire of saving their money, it however *did* so happen that the room remained in precisely the same state, since the time of its institution, in the ..... second year of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, having entirely escaped the revolution, it appears, or any reformation, save the change of punch into meagre negus, the abolition of tobacco, and the permission to extend gaming as far as shilling points, which was done for the sole purpose of accommodating the present baronet, who was thought to have a weak place in that particular, as he was known to lose seventeen shillings at one sitting; not but that might be a political manœuvre, as it was done soon after the birth of his son; and he might intend to make a friend for him at the election time; for there is nothing like looking forward, we all know.

On the other hand, the *commercial* assembly got a snug room, about one third the size of the other, at the Sedge-wood Arms, where they made up a very jocund party, having plenty of warm toast and coffee, and now and then a good supper into the bargain; here they had two fiddles, and a gay tabor and pipe; they wore the most fashionable clothes, and in such abundance, (for it was not the fashion to be half naked thirty years ago.) that, to use Mrs. Collop's appropriate phrase, they buttered their bacon on both sides; and it was really quite a sight to see "How purdigious well Miss Muggleton, the cloth dresser's daater, looked in her blue lustring gound, and rose-pink satin petticoat, with a yallar suash, a pigeoncrop handkitcher sticking out, that won could hardly see a bit of her nose, though its none o' the smaalest, wi' three green feathers sticking strait up out of the top of her cushion, and her hair

dressed out above a quarter of a yard on each side of her face: she daunced with young Walter's, the mercer, in a pea-green coat and crimson waistcoat, and a teal as long as my arm; and a genteel couple they weare, quite as mich so, to my mind, as Miss Megrims, the doctor's daater, with her mamma's twice-dyed green pedasuay over her sky-blue petticoat, with her father's drake's tail o' one side of her sallow face; but only your professional foaks must stick up their heads, and go to the *old* assembly."

To look at this jovial coterie, one might be apt to suspect that they were the happier party, because they fared the better; but this would be a false conclusion, for in this respect, there was at least a perfect equality; each party supposed itself to be an object of ridicule to the other; and though they each affected to treat this ridicule with contempt, yet they were secretly mortified by it; and this uncomfortable sensation had the effect of destroying the pleasure pride of rank gave the one party, and pride of purse gave the other.

When my father first broached the novel idea of bringing these discordant bodies into the near contact of a country dance, or a whist table, he was inundated with remonstrances, overwhelmed with surprise; and all of reproach, and even invective, which was spared to his face, was amply made up the moment his back was turned. My father knew all that was said; for his friends were so sorry, or his servants were so angry, that the truth, from one quarter or other, would come out; it was all the same to my father; he had already seen enough of the ingratitude of the world around him, to believe that even a *wish* to make people happy, and even to *ensure* their happiness to a certain degree, was not the way, at all times, to gain their good word; but he had likewise tasted the pure delight arising from the consciousness of blessing his fellow creatures; he perceived that the divisions of the rich tended to divide and unsettle the poor; he saw unspeakable advantages arising from union, which the narrow-sighted landholder, or the ignorant mechanic, could not scan; he rejoiced that, in a measure, he had procured some degree of intercourse between the inhabitants, on topics of mutual interest, as townsmen: he now sought to unite them in their pleasures, to excite a spirit of good neighbourhood amongst them, in those moments when the heart is most

Edmund description

open to the "charities of life," and presents itself in the most amiable point of view to those around it.

"Rome was not built in a day;" and many points were adjusted, with formal care and tedious apprehensiveness, before this grand event could be brought about; and even after the matter was acceded to, it was long ere the coldness of one party could be brought to accede to the claims of the other, or the other be taught to remember the distance between them, in the moment when hilarity had unbenumbed the sinews of decorum. In my father's presence, they all, like so many playful children, (for the growth of intellect for the most part placed them as such near *him*,) forgot their petty differences, and sported with him; but when the guiding hand was not there, the ceremony of adjusting partners, and reconciling differences, was beyond all common patience, and common understanding; and even the inexhaustible good temper of my aunt Barbara, to whom the steward perpetually referred, was found unequal to the task; and during the following month, there was a register of cases laid by for the return of Mr. Sedgewood, more puzzling than any case which, under the same suspension, had occurred to him in his legal duties; and he was frequently heard to declare, that although he might satisfy the general claims of the town in his commission for the peace, he was utterly unequal to doing *justice* to all the *ladies* who demanded it of him. After a time, he prevailed on Mr. Bailey to take share of his troubles on the bench; but nothing could prevail on the good man to have any thing to say to women, save from the pulpit; and, contrary to the practice of all preceding vicars, he never ventured to take a wife, which is the only fault I can find in his character.

X Prejudice in youth is seldom strong; and it therefore would happen, in despite of sage precautions, that the permission given to association between the parties, induced the sons of tradesmen to look smirkingly towards the portionless daughters of petty gentlemen, though the fathers might exclaim—"It wont do, I tell you, it wont do—I'll have no pride and poverty brought to my door;" and that the sons of such gentlemen, looking on the tradesmen's daughters, considered that pretty girls, with pretty fortunes, were very pretty things; although their mothers remembered "the time when their grandfathers sold them apples, or cheap sugar."

what is the odds between "Sometimes Strong" and "Seldom Strong" — !

X 1 continues to do

At length an instance occurred, in the former case, where Mr. Turnwell, a thriving tammy-weaver, being drawn by some other business to Sedgewood Park, ventured to open his heart to that gentle, though noble spirit, which listened to every man's sorrows, with the same benevolence with which he relieved every man's wants, well aware there is equal charity in both, and that the alms of listening is generally the severer task on our humanity.

"Your honner sees," said the honest man, with a deep sigh, "I have toiled and moiled for five-and-twenty years, like a slave, as I may say, all for my son, and to make my old age comfortable like; and I have got something very handsome scraped together, for which I have nobody to thank but myself, barring, as the vicar says, we ought to thank God for all things, and that's what I hopes I shall allays do in my heart; but ye see the upshot of all is this—my son Tom goes and takes a fancy to Miss Peggy Briggs, who is a gentleman's daughter forsooth, and one of a family of eight children; the eldest of these'n runs away with th' estate, an the rest hasn't a shilling to help 'em, an must get through the world on the strength of their good name and good eddication; more's the pitty; but that's nothing to me: and now, your honner, it's a hard case, isn't, to have one's only son doa this way, when one's getting into years?"

"On the contrary, Mr. Turnwell, I think your son has made a very prudent choice, and secured not only his own happiness, but yours, as I know the young lady very well."

"Prudent! your honner mistakes; it's the most unprudentest thing that ever was; she has no fortune at all, your honner."

"But though she brings no fortune, that is no rule that she will not *save* one, which you must allow to be far the better thing of the two. Believe me, Mr. Turnwell, the daughter of a gentleman of small fortune, taught from infancy to maintain the proper dignity of a genteel family, at a small expense, is, of all others, the most economic wife a man can take; and surely a woman is more estimable, who prudently manages that which is committed to her charge, than *she* who, in bringing a portion, too frequently usurps the right of spending both that and her husband's property into the bargain. To what purpose can you apply the wealth you have gained, so desirable, as that of

making your son happy in the woman of his choice, and by increasing his respectability by such an excellent connexion, which secures you a daughter, whose cares will bless your declining days? Bestow happiness on this young couple, and they will bestow comfort on you; and your thanksgivings will then rise acceptably to that heavenly Father who has mercifully given prosperity to your industry."

"Well, to be sure, your honner has a way in showing one things, that makes one see 'em somehow quite different. To be sure, I should *not* like to see my money squandered by a stuck-up Miss, just come from a boarding school, with more finery on her back than set up her father's shop; but I don't know but, as you say, it might be a good match for Tom in the long run; as to Miss Peggy herself, I like *she*."

"Then you can have no reasonable objection to the match; for you have money enough to set the young people forward, without requiring a fortune with the bride: all I see to retard the match is Mr. Briggs's consent, without which, so excellent a girl as Peggy will not marry; but I trust all will go smooth, through your generous interference; and I have no doubt, if you and I talk over this affair ten years hence, you will then tell me that your daughter's price is 'far above rubies,' as Solomon says."

"Well, for sure, if I warn't thinking of Solomon all the while as I looked at your honner. Surely you don't think Mr. Briggs 'll go to refuse Tom; he's a sightly young man, though I say it; he's a great look of his mother; and he's had a capibable eddication—your honner knows Tom; if you would speak a word by way of backing me, I'd set off to Mr. Briggs's directly, and ax his consent."

"You are perfectly welcome to use my name; for I really approve your son's character as much as his choice."

"I'll settle a thousand pounds on her in the first place," said the old man, bursting away as happy as a prince; whilst my father retired to share the delicious repast of benevolence with her who could increase and relish it.

## CHAP. IX.

A soft answer turneth away wrath; but contention is in the mouth of a fool. *signature* PROVERBS.

My father was called from the contemplation of happiness he had promoted, to the adjustment of differences: in one case, a flax dresser accused his servant of treating him "in an unbearable manner, even to knocking his son down before his face;" in the other, a cottager complained that "his poultry were killed, his apples stolen, and his flower-beds destroyed, by two wanton boys, whose father, a rising fustian weaver, encouraged them in their mischief." A country squire had given up a day's hunting to support the first delinquent, whose father was his tenant; the fustian weaver, and two other tradesmen, accompanied the sons of the latter; and a number of idle, or interested persons followed both parties, who entered the hall so nearly at the same time, that it was some minutes before my father understood that the former were really the persons who had a right to the first hearing.

As it was thoroughly understood that the justice in his chair was a distinct man from Mr. Sedgewood in the dining room, and ~~would~~ have silence, even the obstreperous squire, and his insolent *protégée*, were obliged to remain neuter; while the flax dresser related the various ways in which he had been insulted by a servant to whom he had paid considerable wages, and behaved with uniform kindness, as he could fully prove.

The justice inquired what this fellow could say in his defence?

"Why, your worship," said he, scratching his head, and with a saucy leer at his master, appealing by a look at the squire, "all I say bees, that I thinks mysen as good as he; my feyther has been a tenant on squire Trotem's staete monney a year, an his feyther afore him; and this here chap of a mcaster of mine be no better than the grandson of a cobbler, at's scaved a bit of monny like, and so I couldn't help flinging it in's teeth—that's all; and as for beating li-

son, why I shudn't a touched un, but he bad me remember who was my measter, and that made me mad; if I'd been the squire's sarvant, or your worship's, I shudn't ba moinded, but to call sitch as *he* maister wadn't go down wi me, so I ga the puppy a lick—that's all; the squire 'll spék to my *character*, please your worship."

"I shall not trouble the squire, or any other person, to speak on that subject, because you have revealed your own character, whereby you have fully proved yourself a worthless, ungrateful man. It appears that you, at an age to judge for yourself, bound yourself, for a term of years, to serve this, your lawful master, who has given you double the wages you could receive for your labour as a husbandman, and taught you a business, whereby you might, in time, have risen to the possession of moderate wealth; in return for this service (which, if you had not thought valuable, you would not have sought in the first instance) you have *insulted* him, and wounded him in the tenderest part, by an assault upon his son, and this on the idle pretext of being as good as he is: how dare you call yourself, being, by your own confession, a *bad* servant, as good as he, whom you tacitly acknowledge to be a *good* master, and whom you have bound yourself to consider your superior—a man who has raised himself by honest industry to the possession of property, and who is therefore entitled not only to the respect which is, to a certain degree, the natural consequence of that power which is given by wealth, but to that regard to which every one is entitled who extends the consequence and comforts of the community to which he belongs?—You have despised your master, given an example of disobedience to other workmen, and injured the general interests of society from your misconduct; I deem you, therefore, unworthy of the place you hold in it; you are at liberty to exchange it; and I annul the agreement between you and your master, and offer him two young men, sons of my own tenants, to supply your place. I insist on your making public acknowledgment of your misconduct towards him and his son; on failure of which, I shall recommend him to proceed against you at the quarter sessions for an assault, which action will pave the way for your reception on board a man of war, where you may find a brave and worthy captain, probably descended likewise from a cobbler, but who will better understand the



management of a refractory spirit than your present master has done."

The squire would have interposed; but on the justice assuring him that the matter was *decided*, he withdrew, insisting upon unconditional submission on the part of the offender, and declaring, that if he had not been an impudent rascal, he could not have got himself into such a scrape; for to be sure, the justice had reason on his side in what he said, though he might do it to carry favour with those *low* people against the next election; he would, however, stay over the next cause, for he liked to hear him talk, and it might enable him to see a bit further into his drift; members of parliament had as many windings as a hare, and as honest as the justice seemed, he might be caught at a fault.

Pleased with a harangue which had supported one of their own body, Mr. Olive, the lustian weaver, and his friends, stepped forward with an assured air, and the former, pulling out a well-filled purse, laid it on the table, and declared he would not give Mr. Sedgewood the trouble of investigating the silly affair which had brought him there, but "would pay the fellow's demands at once, and so make an end of it; he was certain that his worship would not suffer a man of that sort to impose upon him—no, he was sure of justice from Mr. Sedgewood."

"It is my duty to listen to the complaint before I apply the remedy; it may be of a nature which money cannot relieve."

Mr. Olive stared at such an observation with an incredulous air, which was heightened when, after the poor man had told his tale of grievances, the justice declared that the young gentleman should not only pay fully for every article they had injured, but ask forgiveness of the poor man in his presence, and tender him two guineas, as a compensation for his labour and loss of time, in bringing them to justice.

Mr. Olive "did not mind the money, "but *his* sons to beg forgiveness for a few frolicks, on a man not worth fifty pounds in the world, was really what he could not submit to easily, he *must* own."

Mr. Briggs (the landlord of the complainant) declared him to be a worthy man, "who had brought up a large family with credit, of a peaceable disposition, and one that

had suffered much from the insolence of his wealthy neighbour, before he had complained to him, and therefore he was determined to see him redressed; and thought the sentence of the justice only too lenient."

"I am never severe," said Mr. Sedgewood, "because I desire, in all cases, rather to reform error than to punish crime; if I did not, I should have undoubtedly sent these young men to the house of correction; instead of which, I wish to give them an opportunity of retrieving their characters, by making concession here, and reparation hereafter, and proving to the world, that the despicable pride of wealth may give way to a noble sentiment in young minds, who may be supposed to be more enlightened than their fathers, from the general diffusion of knowledge. It is for the sake of his sons that I have abstained from informing Mr. Olive, that the consequence he derives from newly-acquired wealth in his own eyes, cannot possibly extend to those who estimate a man for what he is, and not what he has; and that the landed interest of this country must ever maintain its real importance, through all its various gradations, whatever may be the adventitious aids of commerce; and, of course, that no gentleman will suffer a cottager on his estate to be injured by a rich man, in the plenitude and insolence of wealth, without teaching him to know his own situation in society, which gives alike to the tradesman and the landholder a power of extensive benefit to all, but injury to none; yet reserves to the latter a solidity of influence, denied in a certain degree to the former, since the body, though weak and mutilated, deprived alike of beauty and utility, could yet exist without the limbs; whereas the limbs, however excellent in themselves, could not exist without the body. To prolong the simile—virtue and knowledge may be termed the life and soul of society, and in proportion as they are disseminated, every member gains a real superiority among his brethren in the world; the only value of riches is the power they sometimes give of bringing such characters forward; thus they would have enabled Mr. Olive to have obliterated all memory of his origin, by assisting this honest man in the cultivation of his little plot of ground; and I trust that his sons, in the exercise of benevolent affections towards him, may yet remove the stigma attached to their late conduct. Youth is often guilty of error, in which malignity has no

share ; but when those errors are fostered by pride, which ought to be abashed by reproof, or softened into penitence, it is in vain to expect either the liberal conduct of an enlightened tradesman, or the urbanity of a gentleman."

As the justice spoke, the two boys had left the side of their father, and crept nearer and nearer to the justice's chair, when the elder, catching his eye, stood still, overwhelmed with shame ; but the younger still sidled towards him, with a look in which confidence was blended with fear ; and on his catching those words which seemed to palliate his error, he burst into tears ; and at the moment when Mr. Sedgewood ceased to speak, he threw himself on his knees, and clasping the knees of the justice, sobbed out—" That indeed he was not a misisful lad, but he had done a many bad tricks for fun, and was grieved to his heart for it now."

" Say no more, say no more," said the cottager, " I be satisfied ; God knows I want no vengeance ; but maister Olive there can tell whether I made worse o the matter than it was, or if I didn't speak many a toime i' vain."

" I know," said the eldest, blushing, and stammering in excessive trepidation, " you didn't tell *all* ; and I am sure if money could make you amends, I would give you all I have ; but I know," he added, casting a timid glance towards the judgment chair, " I know that wont pay you for throwing the eggs in your face—no, nothing *can* pay you for *that*—I feel—I know it cannot."

The look of warm approbation, which glanced from the intelligent eyes of Mr. Sedgewood, at once humbled the vain spirit of the father, and flattered his paternal feelings ; he drew forwards abashed, yet rallying all he could find in the case to his aid, addressed the boys with—" So, then, it seems you did not tell me the worst of all this, so I couldn't be to blame, you know. If I'd been aware you were bringing me here on a fool's errand, as it were, or to do an improper thing, why it's what I would have scorned, as much as if I'd been born and bred a gentleman—why not?—your worship sees very plainly I didn't know half the mischief they'd done."

" True, Mr. Olive ; but the poor man knew all he had *received*, and yet did not reveal it, though he was (as you say) not worth fifty pounds in the world, and of course *very* trifling losses were great ones to him."

“Ay, certainly, he behaved like an honest fellow; and I beg your worship to notice that I will pay his bill, and give him *five* guineas instead of *two*; and I will take his two youngest girls into the factory at Christmas.”

The boys now overwhelmed their father with thanks, while the praises of Mr. Briggs, seconded by the justice, for their real ingenuousness and contrition, brought tears of a new, but delightful kind, into the father's eyes. The old cottager, grateful and happy, departed with them, while Mr. Briggs remained in conversation with Mr. Sedgewood, passing some remarks on the general character of tradesmen, not very favourable to the new hopes of Mr. Turnwell.

“Depend upon it,” said Mr. Sedgewood, “there are many valuable characters concealed under the husk, which ignorance of those manners we approve renders more disgusting to us than they ought to be, and which another generation will have entirely removed. The progressive state of society demands a resignation of our prejudices in favour of the sons of industry, to which they are fully entitled, since they offer substantial comforts in return for empty claims; and I think it is very possible for a coalition of interests to produce a great increase of refinement to them, and enjoyment to us. When I look round, and perceive how great a proportion of good families in this country are fallen into decay, from the sons being sent into the army, the East Indies, or to become quality retainers to more wealthy relatives; while the daughters, whom my good aunt tells me were the beauties of *her* day, are now wearing out the dregs of life in a single state, on pitiful annuities, I cannot help wishing to see the *old* inhabitants intermarrying at Fairborough with the *new*; it would open a source of wealth to younger brothers, as they would be led into partnerships with their new relatives; and thus the number of inhabitants would increase, the value of land rise with the demands upon its produce, and a general circulation be introduced, of that wealth which at present elevates one party, and, of course, mortifies the other. I am anxious to have not only the *name*, but the *feelings* of party spirit rooted up from amongst us; and I still hope the concurrence of the liberal and enlightened in both situations, will contribute to so desirable an end.”

Mr. Briggs was flattered by this frank and new development of sentiments from Mr. Sedgewood, though he had heard the same doctrine from the same preacher, and a code of the practice had been exhibited to him many times by the same person; but an individual appeal is a distinction which seldom fails of making a friend both to the man and his cause, when we have already a prepossession in favour of the former; so that Mr. Briggs departed in the happiest mood imaginable for meeting Mr. Turnwell, whom he found waiting at his house, and was told at the same time that dinner was ready. Though a systematic economy necessarily prevailed in this family, and the whole appearance of the spacious old-fashioned house gave indication that the days of its grandeur were gone, although its respectability remained, yet the rites of hospitality were never neglected, and the owner, after apologizing for a plain dinner, invited Mr. Turnwell to accept it in the *first* place; and afterwards they would talk about the meadows he had lately advertised for sale, as he apprehended that was the business which had led him to Hazelwood Hall.

"Nothing loath," the honest tradesman sat down on Mrs. Briggs's right hand, and saw, with great satisfaction, a striking proof of that genteel economy, which, by plain plenty, gives the satisfaction so seldom known to the votaries of luxury, on one hand, and denied to stately starvation, on the other. Out of Mr. Briggs's eight children, six sat down at his table; the eldest son was from home on a visit; his nearest brother had been not long before presented with a pair of colours, through the interest of Mr. Sedgewood; Miss Peggy was the third child; she sat at the bottom of the table, and cut the pudding for her little sisters; the old man thought her very pretty and modest, and well he might, for Peggy could not hear the name of Turnwell without becoming all of a glow, and so very nervous, that she could scarcely handle her knife; but her father did not observe it, for his mind was occupied with the sale of the meadows; and he had certain little twitchings about his heart, that rendered his appetite not better than his daughter's. He expected a hard bargainer in the tannery-man; and he took a hearty draught of his home-brewed ale to fortify him for the occasion; and as soon as the ladies were withdrawn, he removed to the top of the table, and with all the fortitude he could muster in his



says *he* to me, (blessings be on his head!) says he, 'Miss Peggy's a wife for a lord, and I wish your son had her,' says he; so ask *him* if ye doubt *me*."

Mr. Briggs was taken by surprise; he begged to speak with his wife, and hastily retired.

When the good father entered the back parlour where his wife and her daughters were at work, the confusion, blended with a degree of slight vexation in his countenance, made Peggy turn pale; and her father instantly insisted on knowing how she stood with young Turnwell? and how she had dared to form a connexion unknown to her mother or himself?

Mrs. Briggs took her part, by saying—"She *had* informed *her* that their affections were reciprocal; but they had both agreed to struggle with the flame, and, if possible, subdue it, as the young man was afraid *his* father would never consent to his marrying a woman without a fortune; and she was quite certain that *her* father would never forgive *her*, if she married a man whose relations objected to receiving her."

"She was right, perfectly right," said the fond father, tenderly kissing her; "but if she is *sought*, you know, my dear, it alters the case," looking at his wife.

"Undoubtedly," said Mrs. Briggs; "I am certain whatever you agree to will be for the best: but do not forget that our most *immediate* care is William's promotion."

Mr. Briggs returned with a smiling air—"I find," said he, "your son has been a pretty successful pleader for himself with my daughter." Mr. Turnwell arose and bowed. "Do sit down, my good sir; it is necessary that I inform you very candidly, that in giving your son Miss Briggs, he must be content to take *her* only, since I cannot promise her any dower till my death, when she will have a small portion, like the rest of my younger branches."

Mr. Turnwell bowed again, made three hems, and then said very stoutly, though with somewhat of a rising in his throat—"Mr. Briggs! sir! if please God you and I go together in the holy estate of matrimony, that is, I mean *our* children, I hope you'll never find no reason to repent. I am a plain man, having worked so hard all my life, that I've had no time for scholarship; but I'll make your daughter a good father for all that; and I'm sure sitch a man as you for a father-in-law is all my son wants; so 't

may do well for both, as his honner says. Now, sir, excuse me if I make a proposal to you that's suitable; on the day my son marries, I will make him my equal partner for the next seven years; at the end of which, if I live, I'll give up all to him; I'll give him three hundred pounds just now to furnish a house with, and two more to begin house-keeping; and I'll settle a thousand pounds on Miss Peggy, out of pure love to her, and good will to you." Mr. Briggs made a gracious inclination of the head. "But now, sir, what I would say is this, if this thousand pounds will be of use to you, it is forthcoming next week—give your daughter security for it—keep the lea closes, and promote your son without injury to your estate. I'm a plain man; but I know gentlemen don't feel same by their fields as I do by a bale of my goods; I tosses 'em into a wagon, and say, 'there ye go, good luck go wi' you!' but the fields stand still; and he that has once been their owner casts many a sorrowful look after them; so, sir, we'll drink good luck to the keeping on 'em, and laying more to 'em, if you please."

When Mr. Briggs eagerly caught the hand of the orator, and gave it the hearty shake he did on the conclusion of this, he forgot tammies, forefathers, and neighbours' sneers, and felt able to sing, "a man's a man for a' that."

I have been thus particular in relating this conversation, because it was the most effectual corner stone which had been hitherto laid for building that temple of harmony the wise and philanthropic heart of my father had so long projected, and was followed in so short a time by a string of marriages under nearly similar circumstances, that it was plain many warm hearts, among the younger classes, had been long waiting to see the ice broke. The removal of prejudices can never be the work of a day, since the growth of intellect must ever be gradual; but much may be effected by the unremitting exertions of an enlightened understanding, aided by conciliating manners, and consistent virtue, in comparatively a short time; and before the next election appeared, so completely had all ranks and characters felt, in some shape or other, the benign influence of my father's exertions, that their only fear now was, whether he would take the trouble of continuing to be their representative; a circumstance they both wished and feared, since the time of his absence, though it had been for several years rendered as short as possible, was ever too long for the comfort of



those connected with him; and the general measurement of time in the neighbourhood, was that memorable and regretted era, "when his honner set off for Lunnun," or that happier date, the first Sunday "when his honner came to church after his journey."

It may be supposed by some, that when the inhabitants of Fairborough began to coalesce, and the various party feuds to die away, by general intercourse, or mutual interest, "*she*" would find little to "*say to her neighbour*;" but, on the contrary, it was found that a wider door was opened for her occupation in this way, since she was enabled on each side to retail all the scandal which had hitherto circulated in one party, through the increased medium of the other also; a new field was opened for observation, in the number of new doors thrown open for the admission of the most respectable and industrious venders; and had the general trade of Fairborough been equally prolific with this branch of commerce, no mart in Europe could have sufficed for the disposal of her goods. 'Tis but justice to say, that sarcasms were now seldom directed to the Park; a kind of general silence, and tacit disapprobation followed them; and "*she*" was very bold when she went further than to hint, "that the last dinner at the Park had some defective dish;" or, "the lady of the mansion looked less lovely than usual."

"But pray is it possible that another election should be drawing on, and you are not born yet?"

I flattered myself this question would come at last, my good lady; but as it has been delayed so long, I shall not answer it till the next chapter.

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## CHAP. X.

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— explore the meaning eye,  
And keep awhile one parent from the sky.

POPE.

WHEN my father and mother had returned to Sedgewood Park, about four months after their first journey to London, I had the great felicity of conferring upon them the only addition their happiness admitted of; but I cannot say I remember much about it, though I have not the least doubt

but the praises bestowed upon me were of such a nature as greatly to exhilarate my spirits at the time, especially those given by my grandfather and grandmother, who were delighted with me beyond all bounds, as was the old housekeeper, who had retired with them from the Park; but who, on the morning devoted to the christening of the future heir, presented herself at the Park in her master's coach-and-four, arrayed in a full suit of crimson damask, the wedding dress of my great-grandmother, and claimed, in due form, the right of bearing me to the same font where she had carried my father before me.

This claim was not easily acceded to by Mrs. Ellen, who, being provided with a new green taffety for the occasion, thought it extremely hard if "she wasn't to carry the baby, especially as Mrs. Grogam was so fat, that she had no lap to lay the poor child on."

"And pray, Miss Pert, what did I come in the coach for, but to help me to carry him properly?" cried the good woman, in a rage, which made her face as red as her gown; so that when my father rescued Ellen from the string of invectives which followed, he declared she ought to thank him for saving her a second time from the flames; when, however, Mrs. Robinson, our own housekeeper, with a conciliating voice, declared, "that although she could not but deem her own right superior to either party, only she loved peace," advanced with me in her arms, and laid me in the brawny ones of Mrs. Grogam, the old woman became more calm, and said, with a smile, "I was the image of my father, only my cap was not near so handsome." The suffusion of red which was spread over me by the reflection of this good woman's face and apparel, leads me sometimes to fancy that I imbibed on this eventful day a predisposition for blushing, which has incommoded me hitherto all my life; and I have ever since regarded a red damask gown with the same jealous aversion Mr. Shandy felt for certain names; and never found myself in any peculiar embarrassment, which brought the unlucky propensity of blushing, without wishing the long ruffled cuffs of Mrs. Grogam's crimson damask at the bottom of the Red Sea.

I just pause in my history to say, that although by reflection I was thus taught to blush, on that day when, according to the forms of the church, I was made a Christian,

yet, from that day to this, I have never blushed that I was a Christian; though I have been frequently thrown among those men whom the Psalmist summarily calls "scoffers," and are designated in our day by the various appellatives of philosophers, reasoners, the enlightened, the liberal, friends of humanity, universal philanthropists, polished casuists, natural religionists, and conscientious atheists—no, thanks to the care of my father, in the cultivation of my mind and my heart, and to that Eternal Father who enabled me to imbibe his precepts, I have been saved from this species of sin and folly; and though I may now blush for present unworthiness, or past wanderings from the path of Christian rectitude, I have never deserted the post to which my feelings and my understanding united me.

When I was only eleven months old, my mother most obligingly presented the world with another son; after which she appeared in no hurry to increase the family; but quietly rested from her labours for the four following years.

My venerable grandfather was my sponsor, and gave me his name. It was the intention and wish of my mother, that her next son should bear that of his father; but during her pregnancy, she received a letter from her uncle in Lisbon, requesting that her child, if a boy, might bear *his* name; and she therefore thought it a duty she owed the infant to name him Charles Beaumarris. He was a lovely, but, during his infancy, a delicate child; and, perhaps, would not have been reared, had he been committed to the care of hands less tender than a mother's; but under her constant attention, and affectionate smile, the fragile flower expanded in loveliness, and increased in strength; and we grew up together, "like twin cherries on one stalk, parted, and yet in unison."

My mother, inured early in life to the active duties of benevolence, and to supply, by personal services, the deficiencies of fortune towards those around, was most singularly fitted for that station of life in which she was placed; her rank was such as to increase her power, without burdening her time; and this precious deposit she always used as one who felt its full value, and found enjoyment in the occupation. Thus, while my father was employed in the manner already related, or inspecting his estates, gesting agricultural improvements, or planning some <sup>subt</sup>

tem of enlarged benefit to his neighbourhood, my mother was devoting some hours to her nursery; others to the children of the poor, the wants of the distressed, the state of her household, and in visiting her *dear* parents; for such she ever considered the parents of her Frederick; these were generally morning employments: the evenings were often dedicated to social, and *sometimes* to ceremonious visiting, since such meetings, though not pleasant, must be occasionally allowed in all great houses: thus the country life of this young couple became so fully occupied, that although they sometimes found moments of fatigue, they never could contrive to find one for ennui; and if they had one ungratified wish, it was for a cessation of even delightful occupation; and I have seen my mother's eye glisten with pleasure, when my father has observed that the rain would confine him to the house all day—a compliment he returned with full interest, when she, having despatched all *her* business, could declare she had now leisure to walk over his improved plantations, to listen to the poem he was waiting to read to her, or beg his opinion on her new music; these were moments so deliciously fleeting, that the interruption naturally arising to them, from either social duties or cares, ever left them so anxious for the renewal, that year after year passed on, and found the married lovers still unsated, still wishing for a little more leisure for the hours of matrimonial courtship; and at times almost envying the good old couple into whose cares they had stepped, the enviable privilege of never being parted.

When the young and beautiful Mrs. Sedgewood made her second visit to London with her liege lord, in consequence of his parliamentary duties, she was a mother, and in the delightful cares of that office, lost even the little desire she ever possessed of mixing in the gay crowd; and she found more leisure arising from her situation than she had ever known in the country. All hopes were therefore extinguished in the breast of the guilty viscount; and the pure joy with which his lady renewed their intercourse, was unmingled by the fears which had once agitated her; she became exceedingly attached to *me*, and transferred the affection she had felt for her own child, to that of a brother she had ever tenderly loved. Her husband was become now more than ever an invalid, hav-

ing lately sought, in the temporary stimulant of the bottle, a supply of that spirit exhausted by vicious pursuits, and enervating indulgencies; and the best years of her life were thus wasted in the wearisome occupations of a nurse, in the monotonous sorrows which arise from discharging the most painful of all duties, towards a being it was impossible to esteem, and difficult to pity; whom affection might render interesting, but even affliction could not mend.

The following meeting of parliament barely allowed my father to see my mother safe; she could not accompany him; and even the new cares her little Charles imposed, could not keep her from the regret occasioned by this separation, which was made as short as possible, and rendered more endurable by the presence of Miss Montague, who now, for the first time, paid my mother a visit, having been always averse from leaving her father, whose son, though running a career of glory, which had advanced him rapidly in his profession, was still the slave of a propensity he alternately regretted and pursued, and which kept his father in such a state of perpetual anxiety, as to render the cares of his daughter more than usually dear to him.

Emily Montague was mild, amiable, and unaffected; she possessed rather solidity of understanding than activity of mind; yet there had been a time when the playfulness of her fancy was wont to enliven the tender dejection of her less happy friend; and many an hour of Arabella's solicitude had been beguiled by her good-humoured loquacity; but there was now a material change visible in these young ladies: a pensive air, either arising from her brother's misconduct, or the solitary life she led since Arabella's departure, had stole over the animated features of Emily, and had changed their expression; she did not talk half so much as she used to do; and what she did say, proceeded rather from her judgment than her imagination—"Of all the companions in the world," said Lady Caroline, "Miss Montague is the best for an *old* woman, except my daughter Sedgewood;" an exception made in every possible case, of course it could offend no one; and Miss Montague very kindly offered to become Lady Caroline's companion during the remainder of her term of absence, as she found that Mr. Sedgewood was returning very soon,

and Arabella could spare her when she had got her best companion.

Mrs. Sedgewood loved her so truly, and had so long sought for her society in vain, that she was really loath to cede her rights; but she wished both to oblige Lady Caroline, and to secure to Emily certain benefits which she thought might arise from the visit. During the absence of Mr. Sedgewood, the neighbouring gentry pressed more particularly round the baronet; and the desertion of the Park filled the house of Lady Caroline in a manner sometimes embarrassing to her, as her health was not equal to exertion. My mother, happy herself in a union which had obliterated the tender sorrows of her girlish days, was desirous of beholding her friend enjoying similar felicity; and she hailed her visit to the baronet's at this time as a happy omen; concluding that it was impossible for a woman so lovely and engaging as Emily Montague to be seen without attracting some generous heart, who in her merits would overlook the deficiencies of fortune.

My mother was not wrong, for now and then such things do occur in the country; and in a very short time Sir Thomas Hilton made his addresses to Miss Montague, through the medium of the baronet, declaring that "he wished to emulate the happiness of Mr. Sedgewood, and become a family man; and that as his estate was unincumbered, he did not care for fortune; and that the future Lady Hilton should see, that though he had lived forty-five years a bachelor, he had been so far domesticated by his mother, as to become quite a pattern for good husbands."

Notwithstanding all this, Miss Montague declined the baronet's offer, gratefully, but decidedly.

Mr. Eltringham, a very agreeable young man, whom the death of an uncle had placed in possession of a good estate, about twenty miles south of Fairborough, notwithstanding the defeat of the baronet, pleaded his own cause; but notwithstanding he had been brought up to the bar, and was generally considered both eloquent and handsome, yet he too was mildly forbidden to urge a passion the gentle Emily declared she never could return.

The baronet and his lady were quite astonished, and even Arabella declared herself quite angry; and they all agreed in condemning Emily's conduct as ridiculous and  
antisocial.

"It may be very true," said Miss Montague, affecting to disguise the tear that was stealing down her cheek with a smile; "but I have *heard* of people, who for more than twenty years have indulged a romantic, because hopeless, passion; perhaps *you* never did, my good friends."

"Ah, my pretty maid," said the old gentleman, "you have caught us sure enough; we must let you take your *own* way; but we must be allowed *ours* in wishing your happiness, though we are not allowed to witness it."

"But she has no engagement of the heart—none in the world! of course it does not apply," said Mrs. Sedgewood, in a discontented tone.

Miss Montague attempted no further defence, but snipping me up in her arms, ran directly into the parlour, to show me the baa-lambs; but in her way thither, she had so nearly suffocated me with kisses, that I resented the liberty in a very audible manner, and obliged her to resign me to my nurse; upon which she very wisely shut herself in her own room, to avoid any further expostulation on her improper treatment of young gentlemen.

About two years after this time, Lady Caroline was induced, once more, to take a journey, on the eventful circumstance of Lady Borrowdale becoming again a mother. Her progeny, this time, was a daughter, which circumstance awoke the ill humour of her husband, and served as an excuse for his treating both the mother and her offspring with brutal neglect; the little stranger was, however, a source of pure felicity to her ladyship, and she received with delight the heartfelt congratulations of her aged parents; they felt that this would be the last time they ever should bestow them, and their parting was accompanied by sincere regret, though tempered by pious resignation.

The baronet was ten years older than his lady, and it might have been expected that each would have departed according to the course of nature; but it was found that the many bodily hardships he had suffered during their long parting, had not produced such a certain, though invisible decay in the constitution, as that wearisome dejection which had marked the lingering hours, and daily vexations, which embittered that period of her melancholy pilgrimage. This journey was taken at an unfavourable period of the year, and they were induced to hasten home, that they might see Mr. Sedgewood previous to his departure

What an expense!

metropolis; and this hurry combined with remote causes to bring home Lady Caroline so much altered, that the moment Mrs. Sedgewood beheld her, she determined to forego the pleasure of accompanying her husband, and to apply every means in her power to the restoration of his drooping parent.

To oppose a determination so amiable and consolatory, was impossible; and in the virtues of his inestimable wife, Mr. Sedgewood endeavoured to comfort himself for the loss of her society, and that of the two prattling boys, whose "little strong embrace" was now wound round the very fibres of his heart, and who rendered their mother every hour, if possible, more dear to him; the parties endeavoured to supply their loss to each other by an interchange of letters; and Arabella was the better enabled to devote her time to this tender employment, by another visit from Miss Montague, who, though she ever declined to join the gayer hours of her friend, yet fled, with all the rapidity of real friendship, to offer assistance in the hour of need. In a short time it was seen that Lady Caroline's complaints had gained considerable ground; and Mrs. Sedgewood resigned, in a great measure, even the sole pleasure of writing to her beloved Frederick; she resigned her boys to the hands of her faithful friend, took up her abode at the baronet's, and, in a short time, slept also in the room of Lady Caroline, who neither took food nor medicine from any other hands than this dear child's, who thus piously answered the prayers of her own parent in the hour of dissolution, and returned the tender obligation she owed to her inestimable husband.

When it was found that the sands of life were indeed running quickly to their close, Mrs. Sedgewood thought it her duty to acquaint her husband with the awful fact; she did so, and he flew down to her, with a rapidity that bespoke the agitation and distress of his mind; but on his arrival, notwithstanding his anxiety to behold his dying parent, he yet felt for the greater sufferer, and first sought his father; he found him in a state of awful composure.—"I shall go to her, though she cannot return to me," said the baronet.

"But, my dear father, we may yet hope."

"No, my son, there are no hopes as to what concerns this world; but, blessed be God! there are the hopes of



eternity for the other ; and I have a comfort in my loss you cannot share, my son—our parting will not be long.”

Frederick burst into a flood of tears.

The pious sufferer no sooner heard of her son's arrival, than she entreated to see him. She was now extremely weak, but her understanding was perfect ; she smiled, and extended her hand as he approached, and whispered to him as well as she was able—“The kindness of his wife, recommended his sister and her child strongly to his care ;” and then, with her usual tenderness, besought him “to take repose, but to leave his wife with her.” Frederick retired, and on the baronet appearing, she tenderly entreated *him* to do the same, urging, as a motive, that it would make their son more comfortable. The good old man, taking her withered hand between both his, pressed it gently to his heart, and stooping over the bed, imprinted a long and tremulous kiss on her pale forehead, and silently withdrew, and a solemn pause pervaded the chamber.

When, at the end of three hours, Mrs. Sedgewood presented the accustomed draught to Lady Caroline, and put her arm round her neck to enable her to take it, she expressed some hopes that she had enjoyed repose. “Much repose, my dear Bella, but not sleep ; my soul has reposed on that eternal mercy which is offered me through the mediation of my Redeemer, and has obtained that refreshment which will support me through the advancing hour.” These words were spoken, though low, yet in a clearer voice, and firmer tone, than any she had uttered for many hours ; and Arabella could not help saying she was glad to hear them. “Do not deceive yourself, my love ; I am now literally dying ; my lower extremities have yielded to the awful change some hours, and before the dawn, my heart will have ceased to vibrate ; I felt all this when I parted from my son and my husband, but I concealed it that I might neither awaken their severer anguish for our parting, nor discompose the happy serenity of my own departing spirit.” She paused, and then added—“Death is awful at the best, my child ; but it would ill become a Christian at sixty-five, to shrink from a trial she must long have expected, especially one whose life has been blessed by all the mercies of affliction and of happiness—who has been taught humility, and favoured with sorrows, only to make her cup of joy.”

sweeter here, and more precious hereafter—may God forbid—his will be done!”

These words, spoken with some difficulty, proved the truth of the assertion; and Mrs. Sedgewood, with increasing love and sublime admiration, beheld the humble triumph of this meek, yet magnanimous, woman, over the terrors of that hour which has appalled the great, and made the haughty tremble; she saw the extent of that affliction, which, in denying itself the parting embrace with those so tenderly beloved, had, even to the last moment of life, given proof of affection sufficient to overcome all selfish wishes; and she determined, however acute the feelings that now throbbed at her heart, to repel every symptom of sorrow, and suffer not a sigh to escape, lest it should ruffle the holy serenity of this sacred hour; and in silent aspirations to Heaven, she continued to watch the last glimmerings of departing life, supported in her exertions by her who thus “comforted her comforters,” till the dawn of day shed its faint beams on the pillow of death. Lady Caroline showed signs of pleasure; and my mother opening the curtains to admit the light more fully, she thanked her, and said, faintly—“Farewell, my daughter; I leave the light of this world, but on my soul doth the ‘Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in his wings.’” She spoke no more; and the course of a few minutes showed that she was translated to a higher state of existence, by such a gentle flight, that her features still retained their usual benign tranquillity.

The long-smothered sorrows of my mother could be contained no longer; and the agony of her grief induced the only attendant she had near her to awake my father, who flew to share and alleviate her sorrows; for his sake she reassumed her fortitude, and endeavoured, by her tenderness, to make up that severe loss every man of feeling and virtue is sensible of when he loses his mother. This kind relative, this indulgent instructor, and faithful friend, first opened the sensibilities of his heart, led him to the blessings of religion, forgave his wanderings, soothed his sorrows, praised his exertions, and confirmed his hopes; a thousand tender remembrances crowd upon his heart at the very name of mother; and happy is he whom Heaven in mercy permits to mourn the loss of a tender parent, on the bosom of an affectionate and sympathizing wife.

After the funeral of Lady Caroline, the baronet, bending

alike with increasing infirmities, and deep, though manly, sorrow, acceded to the wishes of his children, and resided entirely at the Park, where the pleasure he took in the caresses of his grandsons, appeared, in some measure, to render life still capable of yielding him partial enjoyment; though it was plain to all around him that, as he had lost the prop on which he had leaned so long, *he* must necessarily soon follow. On this awful occasion, Lady Borrowdale was permitted, for the first time since her marriage, to revisit her paternal mansion; and when surrounded by his offspring, the good old man exerted himself to make all around him believe that he was as happy as their affections wished him. So much was his peace the object of their fondest solicitude, that every creature around them learnt to participate their feelings; and it was observed, that even the town-bred, selfish, pampered servants Lady Borrowdale was obliged to bring with her, caught the general enthusiasm, and softening into men, felt it an honour to share the envied task of attending on the venerable man; whilst my little brother and I contended who should most rapidly run to hail his footsteps in a morning, adjust his slippers, fetch his spectacles, or reach his snuff-box; and I can yet remember how proud I was to stand between his legs, to read the great letters in the title page of Nelson's *Facts and Festivals*, while Charles sat on his knee, running his little fingers among grandpapa's gray locks, and saying it was like mamma's flos silk.

I can remember, too, that in eighteen months after Lady Caroline's death, there was a cry of sorrow through the house. The baronet, though not worse than usual, one day reclined on the sofa, from which he never arose; a stroke of gentle apoplexy at once released him; the tie of mortality was broken, as if by "touch ethereal slain;" and he was thus restored to the society of his beloved, without experiencing that walk through the "valley of the shadow of death," which is the common lot of suffering mortality.

Thus died Theodore Sedgewood, a man whose story should teach the suffering never to despair, and whose virtues should excite the happy "to do likewise."

## CHAP. XI.

(“ Ah! where do all affections thrill  
So sweetly, as in woman’s breast !”)

My grandfather’s death made no other change in my father’s situation, than the accession of a title, as his affairs had been long in the hands of his son. So fully were my parents assured that the change in their father’s case was indeed a blessed one, since they were convinced that no kindness of theirs could atone to him for the loss of their mother, that they would not permit in themselves the indulgence of that overweening sorrow, to which their affections were too apt to lead them; since no old man could be more worthy of love and reverence, or be blest with the enjoyment of them more fully, than Sir Theodore had ever been, and which, surviving the claims of his more active days, shed their brightest lustre on his setting sun.

When the first months of decent seclusion were over, Sir Frederick and his lady resumed their situation in society; and as the baronet had declared he would never again be parted from his beloved Arabella, she accompanied him to London, where, for the first time in her life, she attracted the notice of her uncle, Lord Llanberry, who most graciously honoured *Lady Sedgewood* with a visit, though Arabella Dermot and *Mrs. Sedgewood* had passed through life hitherto unnoticed. Sir Frederick received this late attention with that quiet civility which indicated the contempt he felt, but would not take the trouble to express, from respect to the memory of *Mrs. Dermot*. Lord Llanberry could not, or would not, see the light in which the baronet beheld his amiable conduct; he was now getting into years; his family was large, and he wished to conciliate his brother, from whom he had been now entirely estranged nearly thirty years; he found that his brother corresponded with *Lady Sedgewood*, and had intimated an intention of making her second son his heir; but he found, also, that there was in this young couple a spirit of roman-

tic liberality, likely to forward his designs of reconciliation with his brother; he therefore determined, if possible, to attach them to his family, and induce them to admit him to a participation of his brother's wealth.

The noble lord was singularly unfortunate in the timing of this visit, for as he most obligingly warded off the calm welcome with which he was received, by inviting himself to dine with his *dear* niece, he became present at the delivery of a very important packet, brought by an extraordinary messenger from Lisbon, and which being sealed with black, seemed to augur something portentous. The servant, who brought it in as the dessert was setting on the table, apologized for his intrusion at such a time, by saying the messenger had insisted on its immediate delivery; and desired that his master would in person assure him that it was received safe, as it was a matter of great importance, not only to the baronet, but to himself.

From this message, it struck Sir Frederick that the honourable Mr. Beaumarris was really dead, and that the packet contained either his will, or papers of great importance; and perceiving, from the great agitation of his guest, that *his* opinion coincided with this idea, he gave orders that the messenger should be immediately brought before him, in that room, for the purpose of satisfying himself that the charge was safely delivered.

A dark-complexioned man, in deep mourning, about fifty, immediately made his appearance; he informed the company that "Mr. Beaumarris had died about three weeks before, of a short illness, having been previously observed to decline fast—that a Portuguese merchant (who, together with two English ones, were left executors to his will, which had been made five years) had sent him over with the copy to Sir Frederick, as well as for the purpose of collecting certain debts due to the estate of his late master, and in other ways to make himself useful in a concern to which he hoped to succeed, having been the confidential clerk of the late Mr. Beaumarris many years, as the papers now delivered would fully prove."

"I recollect you," said Lord Llanberry; "your name is Seton; but these hot climates make terrible work with men, and you were very young when you left England."

"True, my lord," said Mr. Seton, bowing, "thirty years make a great difference in any climate, for I had

not the slightest remembrance of your lordship's features, as you are much more aged than my late master appeared previous to his late illness, though he was sadly altered."

His lordship was fidgetty; and as Mr. Seton, alleging fatigue, seemed desirous of retiring, Sir Frederick gave orders for his accommodation to the servants, observing the eyes of his noble relative were fixed with uncommon anxiety on the important packet, which he intended to open immediately for their mutual satisfaction; but his lordship's curiosity outwent his intentions in part; for as Seton left the room, he could not help saying—"I hope, Seton—that is—I flatter myself my poor brother had long ago forgotten the little difference between us, hey, Seton?—surely he would die in peace; I protest I have wished for harmony these many years."

"So I have heard my master say, and firmly believe it, my lord; for though a very hard man, he was seldom wrong in his judgment; and his veracity was unquestionable."

"True, true; he had many good points about him; but what did he say about me, my good fellow?—do you recollect, Seton, what he said?"

"Perfectly, my lord; he said that you had, in various ways, directly and indirectly, sought his friendship since the year 1765, in the spring of which he had been enabled to make a speculation to the Brazils, which secured him not only independence, but the prospect of wealth incalculable."

Lord Llanberry had advanced some paces towards Seton, which he had repaced with still more rapidity, when, in despite of this rebuff, the possibility of setting aside the will again crossed him, and the words "incalculable wealth," presented a golden harvest to the mind's eye, which was too charming to be suddenly relinquished; so that just as Seton reached the door, he again exclaimed—"I suppose Mr. Beaumarris died exceedingly rich?"

"Then you are mistaken, my lord, for he has had many losses in the last five years; but he has nevertheless died in possession of a fine fortune: and his heir, being very young, will have no reason to complain—No reason," added he, with a look of more animation than his unvarying features had yet assumed, "to sue his elder brother for a

thousand pounds and fly from the country in consequence of the refusal."

This answer not only utterly disconcerted Lord Llanberry, but so clearly pointed out the *real* heir, that his lordship would certainly have departed, without subjecting himself to further mortification, if at this moment myself and Charles had not made our appearance, to claim our customary share of the dessert, and those parental caresses which were our evening reward for good behaviour.

I was at that time considerably taller than Charles, whose person greatly resembled his mother's, and whose beauty was equally feminine with hers; the difference in our persons instantly showed Lord Llanberry who was the heir; and the first glance of his eye towards the lovely child bespoke malignity; the next told him that *his* eldest son had two daughters so nearly the age of the delinquent, that it was not only possible, but, very probable, that the wealth of the merchant brother might yet, by proper management revert to the family stock; he never had dared to expect that his brother would choose an heir from *his* household, since he had heard of the reception given by him to Mrs. Dermot, and the respectable alliance made by her daughter; so that on the whole he conceived it would be sound policy to renounce with magnanimity that which he could not possess, and embrace with avidity the last prop which was afforded to his hopes in the family connexion.

In pursuance of this sound policy, the versatile nobleman smiled at the boys; and while Sir Frederick opened seal after seal of the important papers, he took up his plate, on which a peach and apricot had been newly placed, and beckoned them towards him; Charles hung back with his accustomed timidity; but I, encouraged by a look of approval from my mother, advanced; and taking the fruit with a glance of gratitude, gave the peach to Charles, who retired to enjoy his share of the prize more fully, by leaning against the elbow of his mother's chair.

"Come forward, my little man," said his lordship to Charles, holding out his hand; the child obeyed; "your brother has given you the largest share of fruit by a great deal; he is very kind to you."

"He always gives me the largest oranges, and the biggest piece of cake, and the longest stick, because I am

the littlest boy; and he helps me over the dirtiest places, and does every thing because he loves me, and he is the eldest."

"If that large salver of peaches were yours, what would you do with them?"

"Give them all to Thé, and all to mamma, and all to papa."

"Your generosity, my little fellow," said the baronet, "will not, I hope, be put to the trial exactly in this way; but your fortitude undoubtedly will. It appears," added he, addressing Lord Llanberry, "that my son Charles is left heir to the property of Mr. Beaumarris, of which he is to be put in possession at the age of nineteen, on taking the name and arms of Beaumarris only; in the mean time, the property is to accumulate, under the direction of the trustees."

"Any legacies, Sir Frederick?"

"One of importance, to Mr. Seton, and two, of five hundred each, to charitable institutions in Lisbon."

"I am not named?"

Sir ~~Frederick~~ <sup>Frederick</sup> coloured slightly; and passing the will towards Lord Llanberry, said—"Not in a way one could wish, my lord."

His lordship bowed, returned the papers, and endeavoured to talk to the children; and Sir Frederick, feeling for his situation, placed the will in his escritoir, though he observed there was a codicil in which his lady's name appeared. When she had retired with her children, Lord Llanberry observed, that "he was sorry his brother had made a disposal of his effects in so ridiculous a way, since it was a plain case, that his good friend Sir Frederick was saddled with the expense of educating two heirs instead of one; that his second son's independence must be a source of perpetual family discord, by placing the younger above the elder, and making him an object of envy to all the younger branches of his family; who may yet be numerous," added he, alluding to the appearance of his niece.

The frankness of Lord Llanberry's manners, and the apparent ease with which he bore a disappointment, which, however it might be merited, must still be considered galling, induced Sir Frederick to conceive more regard towards him than he could have conceived under different



circumstances ; and from this time a degree of intercourse was kept up between them.

On a re-examination of the will, it was found that five thousand pounds, and a valuable service of plate, was left to Lady Sedgewood, and a diamond ring to Sir Frederick, as a memento that the testator had owed his life to that gentleman.

"I should like to give this legacy of mine to our dear Theodore," said Lady Sedgewood, "on his nineteenth birthday, as a memento of his mother's love."

~~"But I hope, Arabella, you are going to give me a girl, whom you may like to portion with this sum ; remember, I have set my heart on a daughter."~~

"I most sincerely desire to oblige you," returned my mother ; "and will further permit you to portion the child when she comes ; so, unless you can use this money yourself, allow me to settle it some way on Theodore."

"I will do any thing, so you will make good my wishes, and give me another Arabella," said the fond husband.

This desire was answered ; and in a few months after their return to the Park, Lady Sedgewood gave to the fond wishes of her bosom's lord a daughter, whose little features promised the fairest semblance of herself. Delighted with her new acquisition, the happy mother forgot her usual prudence, and there was now no Lady Caroline at hand to preach it to her ; and by receiving the congratulations of her friends too soon, subjected herself again to temporary seclusion ; but her disorder was so slight, that she would not have considered it necessary to have kept her room, if the baronet had not urged her to it with uncommon earnestness ; a circumstance he rejoiced in, as on the following day he received a letter, which, for the first time in his life, he was desirous to conceal from her, being well aware her heart would participate too keenly the sorrows it portrayed, for her health to bear its feelings, without injury, at so critical a period—it was as follows :—

*"To Sir Theodore Sedgewood.*

DEAR SIR,

"In the distress of my mind, I address you rather than my dear friend, not only because I am aware that it would be improper to shock her with my sorrows, but be-

cause I am compelled to beg the aid of *your* counsel and assistance.

“On the very day in which I received your kind letter, announcing the birth of your daughter, we received likewise the heart-rending intelligence of my dear brother’s death; and whilst my poor father was still bleeding beneath this wound, a number of my brother’s creditors have poured in on him on every side; and though anxious to the greatest degree to satisfy, in the fullest manner, the claims of every one, upon a son in many respects so justly his pride, he finds himself so overwhelmed with this painful business, that he has been compelled to fly from it; and by the time you receive this letter, I hope we shall have arrived at York, where we earnestly request your counsel, and beg you will recommend to us some attorney on whom we can rely. My father has hastily signed a deed, which ensures his responsibility; he is, you know, an utter stranger to business of this kind; and I dread his being led, in his present state of agitation, to pledge himself beyond his power of fulfilment. Oh! sir, consider, I beseech you, what is to be done! I know my dear Lady Sedgewood will be most anxious for us; break this sorrowful intelligence to *her* in the way she is best able to bear; but guard it from every other person, with that delicacy which has ever characterized your actions.

• “Most sincerely yours,

“EMILY MONTAGUE.

“Norton, June 10.”

The moment Sir Frederick had read this letter, he perceived there was an immediate necessity for the most active offices of friendship; he well knew that the good old man was indeed “an Israelite in whom was no guile,” and who would be ready at any hazard to snatch the name of his son from obloquy, though his property might thus become the prey of those sharpers, who were probably the only creditors of his infatuated son. As York was only thirty miles from Fairborough, he prepared to go thither immediately; and in order to keep the disagreeable affair which had driven the good pastor thither from gaining wind, he took with him only a young boy, who had become lately an assistant to the groom; and endeavouring to hide the grief he really felt from my mother’s eye, informed her “that he was

summoned to York on some business relative to his duty as clerk of the peace, but that he hoped to return before to-morrow night;" after a hasty kiss, he vaulted into his saddle, and was out of sight in a moment.

My father had had many journeys to York since my mother's marriage, but none which had impressed on his features such an air of chagrin and disquiet as this; she felt uneasy, and could not forbear exclaiming, as she watched him from the window, "What can have taken him away in such a hurry as this?" My mother did not recollect at this moment that she was not alone, or she would most probably not have spoken; but Ellen was at this moment adjusting the baby's cap, and she replied to what *she* conceived a question, by saying—"It was that letter, my lady, I dare say, which Frank took his honner, for he said before ever Frank got out of the room, 'I must have my horses saddled this moment.'"

"Of course," said Lady Sedgewood, recollecting that the baronet had said it was a matter of importance.

"And was a lady's handwriting," continued Ellen, "Frank said; but not Lady Borrowdale's."

Lady Sedgewood took up a book, and Ellen was silent; but though she read, she did not therefore understand; the words swam before her eyes; an insinuating serpent wound around her heart, and for the first time in her life, she felt the deadly poison of jealousy wind its malignant influence through her bosom, and seek for food to feed on; but this was no easy task, where the unerring and unchanging tenderness of nearly seven years of unequalled love and happiness had proved the stability of not only principle, but affection; and my mother in a few minutes became astonished that she could have allowed herself to indulge such a weakness. At this moment I made my appearance, on my usual visit to my little sister, who was at the time a little fretful, and I inquired, very innocently "if she was a poor unhappy girl?"

"No, child, she is only a wrangling little baby," said my mother.

"Because I heard papa say those words as he went through the hall to himself like; and so when I heard sister cry, I thought he meant her, perhaps."

Luckless observer that I was! these fatal words again awoke the keen torture reason had but half allayed; and my

mother for many hours of that fatally memorable day suffered the misery those only know, "who doubt, yet fondly love." Conscious of her folly, even in the severest paroxysm of her suffering, she anxiously sought to hide her feelings from every eye; and complaining of indisposition, went to bed long before her usual hour; but her night was very restless, and she did not sleep till long after the harbingers of morn had hailed its arrival.

Passion of every kind is a species of disorder so immediately connecting and disordering both body and mind, that its votary must be in a greater or lesser degree its victim; and although ravages on the frame are seldom perceived till the storm is blown over in the more sensible part of the system, yet they seldom fail to give "sure earnest" of their powers afterwards. When Lady Sedgewood awoke, her mind was more calm; she looked back on the sufferings of yesterday as an uneasy dream; and though a sense of sorrow and pensive forlornness pressed on her mind, her reason was able to act, and she severely condemned her for the weakness, and even cruelty, of condemning a concealment which was only wrong because new, and which most probably proceeded from some sensation of even more than usual kindness. She now perceived that every little circumstance she had condemned in the moment of suspicion, was equally attributable to the dictates of that tender affection, which would keep sorrow from approaching her; full of self reproach, she determined to exert herself to banish every trace of melancholy from her face; and inspired by this resolution, she determined to rise, though she found herself so weakened by the perturbation of the evening before, as to be little able to make such an exertion.

How sweetly did she feel rewarded for thus recalling the powers of her mind to her aid, and restoring her banished smiles; when the beloved of her heart appeared many hours before she could have expected him, the delight she experienced, though not unalloyed, for self reproach mingled with the sensation, gave a lustre to her eyes, and an animation, that by deceiving the baronet into a belief that she was really much better than he expected, induced him to open the whole affair of her friend's distress to her, which he was the better enabled to do, because he could now, with truth, assure her, that the affairs of her good old guardian were really in a much better train than before his journey; and that he hoped, in the course of a few weeks, she would

have the pleasure of receiving both him and her dear Emily at Sedgewood Park.

The long and bitter fit of weeping which Mrs. Sedgewood experienced on this information, appeared to the baronet so far to exceed even its melancholy cause, that he was in turn affected exceedingly, and began to fear that the late Captain Montague had possessed an interest in the heart of his Arabella, far beyond what he had ever supposed; but scarcely had this agonizing thought crossed his mind, when the repentant and self-condemned wife, throwing her arms round his neck, informed him that her tears were those of penitence, as much as sorrow. When this little confession was made, and received with as much gratitude for the love it evinced, as anger for the doubts it had harboured, the tears were wiped, the real situation of Mr. Montague explained, and a number of various plans for his future comfort entered into; cheerful prospects succeeded to painful recollections, and the flame of mutual love and endearing confidence burnt more vivid from its late depression. Arabella ridiculed her own folly, in the playfulness of contrasted feelings, with so much genuine humour and sportive wit, that Sir Frederick declared he was convinced she had invented the whole affair, for the purpose of making herself more charming; and in her pretended dread of a rival, had gained an opportunity of proving how completely she could concentrate all that could fascinate in the mistress, or secure affection in the wife.

The exertions and the agitations, nay, even the sweeter creations of these two days, were extremely unfavourable to the health of my mother; but she did not therefore forget the duties of friendship; and though her remaining weakness rendered the society of my father unusually dear to her, she conjured him in a few days to return to York, and again comfort the unhappy by his presence, or benefit them by his advice, and even to remain there as long as he found it necessary; and she made him the bearer of a long consolatory letter to Emily: they parted under the heaviest auspices; and Arabella calling her darlings around her, and wondering how, with so many blessings as she usually possessed, she could have conjured up the means of forming an unhappy hour. But what did she say to her neighbour? "think I to myself;

very good so far

It is very ridiculous

3 1234567890

David Cro

Some fools have taken  
the liberty of writing many  
very silly observations—  
queries &c in this Book  
which ~~is~~ none of the  
but — —

Beloved Book

x I should think  
you had stud-  
ied grammar

